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Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations".

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Summary report

Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations

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Summary

The present report summarizes the background, methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations of the "Evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work by the United Nations system organizations" conducted in 2014 by the Joint Inspection Unit.

The summary report is based on the main evaluation report prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit, which contains extensive justifications, evidence and analysis of the subject in accordance with the Norms and Standards for Evaluation of the Joint Inspection Unit. The full evaluation report is available on the JIU website. (www.unjiu.org).

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Abbreviations

CEB	United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (of the United Nations)
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HLCP	High-level Committee on Programmes
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre (of ILO)
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

I. Introduction

Background

1. Full and productive employment and decent work for all are an internationally agreed goal which is closely linked to the achievement of several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and to the ongoing discussion on post-2015 sustainable development goals.

2. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Secretary-General have called on United Nations organizations, funds, programmes and agencies to lend their support to the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all. The 2006 ministerial declaration of the Economic and Social Council stated: "We are convinced of the urgent need to create an environment at the national and international levels that is conducive to the attainment of full and productive employment and decent work for all as a foundation for sustainable development".[1]

3. This goal takes on added relevance as the world strives to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and sets out a new sustainable development agenda post-2015. A review of how these United Nations bodies have responded to the call by the Economic and Social Council is timely in providing information to support the aspirations and goals for sustainable development.

4. As part of its programme of work for 2014, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) conducted an evaluation of mainstreaming of full and productive employment and decent work in United Nations system organizations. The evaluation was proposed by the JIU, and the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) welcomed the proposal and provided the JIU with extrabudgetary funding to carry it out.

Objectives

5. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide information to the General Assembly/Economic and Social Council and to the legislative and governing bodies of the participating organizations and to the members of United Nations Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) on how the United Nations system organizations have implemented the resolutions aimed at mainstreaming or supporting the decent work agenda with a view to using the lessons learned in the finalization of the post-2015 agenda. The purpose of the evaluation is not to review ILO activities to mainstream decent work, but rather the United Nations system's response.

6. The evaluation has three objectives:

- To assess how the United Nations system organizations have taken up the call from the Economic and Social Council to mainstream decent work principles into their own strategic planning/work at the inter-agency (CEB), headquarters, regional, functional commission and country levels. Special attention will be paid to organizations that have a strong mandate in the areas of poverty alleviation and social protection
- To identify what mechanisms are put in place within the United Nations system for mainstreaming, assess barriers to implementation and identify aspects of an enabling environment as well as the challenges faced by the system in integrating decent work issues at different levels

[1] Para. 1.

- To identify successes and good practices in mainstreaming the decent work agenda into the activities of the United Nations system organizations.

Scope

Coverage of organizations

7. The scope of the present evaluation covers the United Nations, its funds and programmes and specialized agencies who through CEB have endorsed the concept of mainstreaming decent work. It focuses on JIU participating organizations with particular emphasis on those organizations with a mandate for poverty alleviation, eradicating hunger, maternal health and HIV/AIDS. The evaluation will focus on four levels of the United Nations system in its efforts at mainstreaming: (a) through the inter-agency (CEB/High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP)) mechanism; (b) the regional level/the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council; (c) corporate headquarters level of the participating organizations; and (d) the country level.

Key definitions, conceptual framework and evaluation questions

8. **Decent work:** Decent work has been defined by ILO and endorsed by the international community as being productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers better prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.[2] The four pillars of decent work are: (1) employment creation and enterprise development; (2) social protection; (3) standards and rights at work; and (4) governance and social dialogue.

9. ILO does not provide an explicit definition of "mainstreaming decent work" in its guidance materials; it indicated that the toolkit which was designed to support the mainstreaming of decent work followed the approach adopted during the gender mainstreaming process.

10. Based on the definitions on mainstreaming gender, the Inspectors put together a working definition of mainstreaming decent work which has been adopted for the purpose of the present evaluation.

11. **Mainstreaming of decent work:** Mainstreaming decent work into the activities of the United Nations system organizations is a process whereby organizations ensure that their policies, strategies, programmes and activities are interlinked with employment and decent work related initiatives, outcomes and objectives. Within their respective mandates, organizations embrace and enhance these outcomes and objectives by taking into account their implications in designing and implementing policies and activities at global and national levels.

12. Thus to mainstream means that agencies utilize a lens to see how their policies, strategies, programmes and activities are interlinked with employment and decent work outcomes and how they can enhance these outcomes by taking full account of their implications during the design stage and while advising and assisting countries and constituents with regard to their adoption and implementation. Clear political will and commitment to decent work principles should lie at the highest levels and there should be allocation of resources (both financial and human) for mainstreaming.

[2] ILO, *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* (2008), p. vi.

13. In order to make an assessment of the level of mainstreaming of decent work undertaken by United Nations system organizations, the Inspectors identified 10 key factors based on the desk review, the legislative framework (Economic and Social Council resolutions on decent work), the working definition developed above, and the experience/literature from mainstreaming gender in the United Nations system.

14. Factors indicating mainstreaming in United Nations system organizations:

1. United Nations organizations' awareness as regards issues relating to decent work is assessed and awareness is increased through actions of governing bodies, senior management or training of staff;
2. Elements of activities of United Nations organizations which are linked and contribute to the promotion of the four pillars of the decent work initiative are identified in the policies and strategic documents of United Nations organizations;
3. Decent work related programmatic elements or initiatives appear in the work of United Nations organizations;
4. Guidance is elaborated and approved to promote systematically the decent work initiative in the programmatic activity of the organizations' departments and country offices;
5. Guidance is utilized and specific programmes and/or initiatives are approved and implemented taking into account one or more of the four pillars of decent work;
6. Joint actions or cooperation are planned and implemented with other United Nations organizations at corporate, regional or country levels;
7. Cooperation is initiated through United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) or via other frameworks for country level cooperation among United Nations country team (UNCT) members;
8. Decent work-related specific programmes or initiatives are monitored and periodically evaluated;
9. Good practices are identified;
10. A focal point unit or persons is identified as resource person within an organization aware of decent work who can provide advice to colleagues. Financial and human resources being set aside for this would be a positive indicator.

Conceptual framework

15. A simplified logic model was developed. It takes as the starting point the Economic and Social Council resolutions on mainstreaming decent work while recognizing that there are other entry points to mainstreaming decent work. The framework shows the conditions that would have been needed to have ensured successful mainstreaming of decent work at all levels of United Nations system organizations. As the objective of the evaluation is to describe the system's response to the Council's resolutions, the other entry points are not delineated in this diagram. The diagram below was used to understand the areas in which the United Nations system worked well and in which areas they did not perform as expected to reach the strategic goal of decent work mainstreamed in United Nations system organizations at all levels. This can help to further a better understanding of the overall picture, including of which areas need strengthening in terms of future strategy and to continue mainstreaming efforts.

Decent Work Mainstreamed in all UN system organizations, funds, programmes and agencies
(Joint) Programmes or activities developed through DW lens and implemented at all levels
DWA included in country level plans of UN system organizations
Action Plans/Strategic Plans reflect DW elements at regional and country level
Action Plans/Strategic Plans reflect DW elements at HQ
UNDAFs include DWA elements
Training on DW to organizational staff at HQ and county levels
Sector specific guidance materials developed
Policies related to DWA developed by UN system organizations
Member states /social partners recognize importance of DW and integrate in their national/sectoral plans
Organizations conduct self-assessment to identify areas where DW can be mainstreamed
Baseline of organization on DW established to monitor implementation of resolutions
Training on DW
Advocacy on DW
Knowledge generated and shared on DW initiatives
Awareness raising and advocacy on DWA conducted by ILO and CEB
CEB toolkit on Mainstreaming DW developed and implemented
CEB MONITORS IMPLEMENTATION
Resolutions on the importance of DW
DW on CEB Agenda
ECOSOC resolution to mainstream Decent Work

Key evaluation questions

16. Evaluation questions were developed based on the conceptual framework above, the Economic and Social Council resolutions from 2006 onwards which requested the United Nations system to take on and mainstream decent work and the factors identified from the desk-review phase. The following are the overarching evaluation questions:

- What is the level of awareness among United Nations system organizations of the decent work agenda?
- To what extent has the decent work agenda been reflected in headquarters and national UNDAF-type strategies, policies and programmes by United Nations system organizations?
- To what extent is the decent work agenda relevant in the United Nations system organizations, which have included/not included such goals in their strategic plan/development frameworks? If an organization has not included the decent work agenda in its policies and programmes, what are the reasons?
- What were the most significant changes (at organization and country levels) as a result of efforts to implement the Economic and Social Council resolutions in connection with full and productive employment and decent work for all?
- Are the actions and efforts taken at organization (corporate) and national levels coherent with one another?
- Have the United Nations system organizations managed to work on mainstreaming the decent work agenda and utilized the toolkit developed in a continuous and sustainable way?
- What are the main factors contributing to the sustainability of decent work at the different levels?
- What are some good practices in countries where the United Nations system mainstreamed decent work in UNDAFs and implemented the decent work agenda in their country activities?

Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness, relevance, coherence, sustainability

Description of approach and methodology

17. The evaluation used multiple methods for data collection and analysis and was mainly of a qualitative nature. The evaluation began with a desk review of documentation available for initial synthesis and analysis, used in the preparation of an inception report on design, scope, key issues to be addressed and evaluation questions. Data collection included: (a) questionnaires to organizations and regional commissions for information on their activities; (b) surveys of a select group of UNCT members and United Nations resident coordinators to gather information on their experience in mainstreaming decent work at the country level such as UNDAFs; (c) interviews with selected stakeholders on the use and implementation of strategic plans and guidance materials as well as to validate the findings from the questionnaires and desk reviews.

18. Missions were undertaken to conduct interviews at headquarters and functional commission locations in Geneva, New York, Rome and Vienna. Field visits were undertaken to five countries (Argentina, Cambodia, Republic of Moldova, Uruguay and Zambia) as well as to regional commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP).

19. An advisory group was constituted to provide substantive and strategic advice to the team on key pieces of its work, such as brainstorming on conceptualization, advice/comments on the inception paper, comments on the preliminary findings and the draft report. Members of the Group were selected among senior experts dealing with the decent work agenda in the United Nations or academic institutions and acted in their personal capacity.

20. In accordance with article 11.2 of the JIU statute, the present report has been finalized after consultation among the Inspectors so as to test its conclusions and recommendations against the collective wisdom of the Unit. The draft report was circulated to the organizations for correction of factual errors and the making of substantive comments on the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations

21. There were several limitations to the methodology:

- Low level of awareness and interest in a number of organizations. Intense discussions were necessary with the interviewees to overcome the different variations in understanding the concept of decent work in order to receive relevant information.
- Weak institutional memory. Some organizations were unable to identify any sources of information capable of answering questions relating to the work conducted immediately following the Economic and Social Council resolutions in 2006 and 2007. That limited the volume and validity of the data that could be gathered on the efforts of the organizations from 2006 to 2010 on the decent work agenda.
- No dedicated structure/central coordination function on decent work. Many organizations had difficulties in filling out the questionnaire and to identify departments or units dealing with the issue in their organization.
- Low response rate of survey. The methodology included surveys for both the resident coordinators and UNCT members. Given the low response rate among UNCT members (19 per cent) as well as the geographically skewed sample, the Inspectors excluded the results of the UNCT survey from the analysis of the report.

Legislative framework

22. Between 2006 and 2011 there were six key resolutions and ministerial declarations adopted by the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council relating to decent work, which tasked the various stakeholders of the United Nations system to work on mainstreaming decent work.

23. These declarations and resolutions requested the member States, United Nations system organizations, regional commissions, functional commissions, CEB and the Secretary- General to work on issues of mainstreaming. The Economic and Social Council resolutions called for action by CEB in coordination with ILO, to develop and implement a toolkit to support the identification of areas of work for the United Nations system organizations to mainstream decent work; at the organizational level through a self-assessment exercise to identify areas where decent work could be mainstreamed and to develop action plans and policies to facilitate the mainstreaming of decent work. The regional and functional commissions were tasked with considering how their activities contributed to the goals of decent work and the impact

of their policies on specific areas of competence. Finally in order to turn the plans and policies into action and implementation United Nations system organizations were asked to support individual countries through their UNDAFs (and other plans) to mainstream decent work. The resolutions also included requests to raise awareness on decent work and asked ILO to assist in developing a mechanism (Online Knowledge Sharing Platform) for sharing its expertise on employment and decent work with the rest of the system.

II. Conclusions against the key evaluation questions

General assessment on the level of mainstreaming across all four levels

24. Overall response of the United Nations system to the Economic and Social Council requests to mainstream decent work was a moderate success, although there were some significant differences between headquarter and country offices in certain cases. The country level response through UNDAF and the country framework programme of the United Nations system organizations' field offices was strong; while at the level of the subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council the response could be considered as moderate with some variations among the commissions. At the organizational level there was a significant variation of efforts to mainstream decent work ranging from strongly mainstreamed to ad hoc actions/no visible signs of mainstreaming.

Effectiveness

Awareness

25. In general, awareness of the decent work agenda as a concept among United Nations staff interviewed for the present evaluation was low. The lack of solid understanding among the staff interviewed appeared to be due to both a lack of training and the high staff turnover. Knowledge sharing was promoted with the development of a toolkit under the European Commission-ILO project through a knowledge-sharing portal, but the use of the platform was weak and many of the United Nations system staff interviewed were not aware of its existence. At the country level, however, awareness was higher among United Nations staff in several countries, largely due to decent work's prominence in the host country's political and development agenda and its influence on the UNCT and UNDAF process.

Implementation of the resolutions and CEB toolkit

26. It was found that none of the organizations had implemented the three phases for mainstreaming decent work as called for in the Economic and Social Council resolutions. The CEB toolkit was conceived to assist United Nations system organizations to identify areas to mainstream decent work by delineating a road map for that purpose. Not completing the three phases compromised the effectiveness of mainstreaming decent work from that perspective.

Reflection in headquarter strategies and UNDAFs

27. The evaluation found that the decent work agenda as a concept was reflected in only a handful of United Nations system organizations' strategic policies and documents. The inclusion of the agenda at the country level was far more visible, with most UNDAFs encompassing outcomes on employment creation (pillar 1) and social protection (pillar 2) and to a more limited extent rights at work (pillar 3).

However, except for certain instances when UNDAFs explicitly referred to decent work as a standalone outcome or a cross-cutting priority, in most cases initiatives relating to the decent work pillars were not explicitly attributed to the term.

Relevance

28. Most of the responses provided by United Nations organizations to the JIU questionnaire considered that the decent work agenda or individual pillars were relevant to their organizational mandates. However, only a few of them acknowledged and conceptualized their mainstreaming efforts on the assumption that the agenda as a concept was a relevant entry point for their activities. The relevance of the first pillar of employment creation and enterprise development to organizational mandates was highest whereas there was an indication that organizations were increasingly starting to see social dialogue and standards and rights at work to be relevant as well. It was rare for organizations to have embraced the concept of decent work as a package and mainstreamed it in an integral way; that was due to differing organizational mandates and the perception expressed by interviewees to the Inspectors numerous times over the course of the interviews that that would be encroaching on the mandate of the ILO.

29. There has been an increasing shift in the strategic priorities of United Nations system organizations towards those relating to decent work since the financial crisis in 2008, particularly with regard to the expansion of social protection and employment/job creation issues. Those shifts cannot be attributed directly to the Economic and Social Council resolutions on decent work. The underlying factor for the inclusion of social protection and employment/job creation in organizational activities is most likely due to the external environment (financial crisis) than the Council resolutions. Organizations which mainstreamed decent work into their activities tended to be those whose traditional mandates and priorities were already related to the decent work agenda.

Coherence between headquarters and national levels

30. Only a few organizations provided specific guidance relating to the implementation of decent work agenda to the field offices. While the experiences of these organizations show attempts at coherence between the headquarters and field levels, it is however difficult to make a global assessment on the coherence of the agenda programmes between headquarter and country level operations. In the case of the five countries reviewed, with very few exceptions, most country offices received no guidance on decent work. It was found that the guidance produced for technical sectors, which showed linkages to decent work at the headquarters level was, where it existed, strong. Cooperation within headquarter units on decent work was more evident than between headquarter and country offices.

31. Coherence is stronger from the point of view of decent work issues at the level of UNCT. UNDAF priorities are first and foremost influenced by national government priorities. Other influential factors include efforts by United Nations resident coordinators and advocacy and promotional work by local ILO offices and the UNCT members. These factors have a major influence on the extent to which the decent work agenda is incorporated into the UNDAF and can be measured by the incorporation of the decent work pillars into it.

Sustainability

32. The global and national dialogues on post-2015 sustainable development provided opportunities to keep decent work, employment and inclusive growth on the global agenda. Its likely inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would indicate wide acceptance and support at all levels for the United Nations system organizations to continue their work on mainstreaming decent work issues. Sustainability of results achieved however would require further investigation into what has worked and scaling up ad hoc activities to the level of organizational strategic and planning documents. Awareness-raising of staff will need to be strengthened to continue the work on decent work.

33. In the case that the decent work agenda is included into the SDGs for the post-2015 period, in order to further foster an enabling environment and ensure sustainability of mainstreaming efforts, a decision on the inclusion of the decent work agenda into the SDGs should be accompanied by moving the agenda higher on the agenda of the national development strategies of member States; continuous, and scaling up of, advocacy efforts by the ILO offices; increased efforts from the resident coordinators' offices supported by appropriate guidance and attention at the headquarter levels; stronger commitment to knowledge sharing and maintaining institutional memory; and identification and allocation of resources by organizations and donors to undertake future activities on decent work.

III. Findings

Economic and Social Council and CEB levels

34. The six key resolutions and declarations reflect a comprehensive approach addressing all key players and bringing the importance of the decent work agenda to the attention of member States, subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and United Nations system organizations. However, the resolutions lacked clear monitoring mechanisms for following up their implementation.

35. CEB response was supportive, forthcoming and called for some concrete actions and steps to launch and promote implementation. However, it was not sufficiently concrete in the assignment of longer term responsibility for implementation and monitoring.

36. After the endorsement of the toolkit prepared by ILO, CEB/HLCP did not effectively review the response or progress made by the United Nations system organizations in a systematic manner. While the awareness-raising function of the CEB decision should be recognized, that unanimous endorsement was not transferred into a change in the way in which CEB members thought of decent work nor were those ideas translated into robust and intentional actions across the United Nations system.

Subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council

37. Attention and commitment to the decent work agenda in the four functional commissions reviewed have varied from their not having discussed the issue at all to having decent work on their agenda, to taking a concrete decision on decent work. There was lack of a systematic approach and awareness of the agenda among the commissions and none of them reported back to the Economic and Social Council on any results achieved or decisions taken. The Inspectors point out that this is due to the

lack of such provisions in the Council resolutions as well as of any initiatives and suggestions from most of the secretariats of the commissions.

38. The response from the five regional commissions to considering and mainstreaming decent work varied greatly. Differences in their reaction to decent work can be attributed to regional differences and member States government priorities as well as to the mandates given by member States to the regional commissions.

39. The regional commissions tackled the issues of decent work through raising the awareness of member States in their region, undertaking regional level projects and activities relating to decent work and developed methodological tools and research and policy briefs.

United Nations system organizations level

40. The response at the level of United Nations system organizations to the Economic and Social Council resolutions was weak. The CEB *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*, which had been endorsed unanimously by the CEB executive heads, was not fully implemented by any organization.

41. While the decision to set up a system wide action plan on decent work never materialized, some elements of the decent work agenda were included in the United Nations Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty and in the various crisis response initiatives developed by the system in the years 2008-2010. The agenda as a whole gained a focused response, specifically through the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor initiatives.

42. Measurement of the level of mainstreaming of the decent work agenda by United Nations organizations cannot be determined solely by their direct response to the three-phased approach. In the programmes and activities of those organizations a number of initiatives and projects could be identified, which had directly or indirectly contributed to the promotion of one or more pillars of the agenda.

43. The level of awareness and understanding of decent work within the United Nations system organizations are weak. There was limited evidence of training, awareness-raising activities and information-sharing sessions and what occurred seems to have peaked in 2007/2008 with no systematic follow-up in the past five years.

44. The decent work agenda concept could be found in a few United Nations organization policy papers, and in strategic and operational plans. Evidence suggested a superficial and cursory treatment of the issue, although it was observed that there was an increasing trend to include it.

45. In a number of United Nations system organizations the decent work related programmatic elements in their activities cannot be related to the conscious implementation of the decent work agenda. However, these projects and initiatives stem from their traditional mandate and practice and have made positive contributions to the promotion of one or several pillars of the agenda. The absence of a common understanding of the concept of decent work often led to disparate and incoherent activities.

46. In some United Nations organizations where relevant provisions relating to decent work were included in policy papers and strategic plans special efforts were made to orient and guide the different units in headquarters and field offices to pay attention to decent work and/or its pillars. There were also some notable examples of

joint efforts of United Nations system organizations in that regard. The Inspectors, however, came across quite a few activities, that could have included elements of decent work, which represented missed opportunities.

47. Specific technical units of United Nations system organizations have been active in seeking cooperation with those of other United Nations organizations to promote, complement and enhance their traditional activities to contribute to the pillars of the decent work agenda. The composition of the collaborating entities differs depending on the specific technical sector, but there is strong reliance on ILO as the major promoter of decent work in the system.

48. There were very few examples among United Nations system organizations of proactive monitoring and evaluation of decent work related programmes and initiatives. They were organizations having the highest level of decent work mainstreaming.

49. There was weak in-house cooperation within an organization on decent work issues among the organizational units. That silo approach to decent work-related activities was not only an obstacle to a consistent and coordinated approach within organizations but made it difficult to achieve a deeper level of cooperation and joint action among the United Nations organizations at the global level.

Country level

50. The reflection of decent work in UNDAFs was stronger than that in strategic plans at the organization level. The decent work pillars have increasingly appeared in UNDAF documents since the adoption of the Economic and Social Council resolutions although the prevalence of each pillar shows considerable variation.

51. While the decent work agenda was relevant to the countries reviewed,[3] priorities granted and actions undertaken with respect to its constituent pillars varied. In general, there appeared to be a greater likelihood for countries that were higher up on the development ladder to prioritize decent work in its entirety i.e. all four pillars tended to be adequately reflected in UNDAFs. For transitional and lesser developed economies, while job creation and social protection were usually central to national development priorities, (with certain exceptions) rights at work and social dialogue — while considered relevant — might not carry the same weight as the other two pillars.

52. Conceptual understanding and awareness of decent work among UNCT members were arguably correlated to the priorities placed upon individual decent work pillars by national governments. Where awareness existed, it was learned primarily on the job through interactions with national partners and UNCT members, in particular ILO field offices.

53. With the exception of one organization, explicit instructions and guidance on decent work from headquarters were virtually non-existent, except in the form of organizational directives on topics relating indirectly to decent work. There was little or no awareness among most individual UNCT members either of the Economic and Social Council resolutions on decent work or of the CEB *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*. Thus, apart from a few exceptions outlined in the case

[3] While country-level findings are derived primarily from the five country case studies, to ensure that they are as representative as possible of the United Nations development universe, they have been triangulated with: (a) results of an electronic survey of United Nations N resident coordinators; (b) internal analysis of UNDAFs for 20 other countries; and (c) findings from the 2013 internal ILO desk study of UNDAFs for 44 countries.

studies, a clear link could not be established with regard to headquarter-level directives or actions translating into decent work mainstreaming at the country level.

54. The fact that most of the present UNCT members had never received any dedicated training on decent work underscores a major missed opportunity for further conceptual understanding of the issue. While it was noted that immediately following the adoption of the CEB toolkit, awareness-raising initiatives had been more frequent, high levels of staff rotation in country offices had resulted in a decreasing level of knowledge of decent work.

55. National development priorities of the host country and advocacy, awareness-raising, technical and policy support by and from ILO on the decent work agenda have played a vital role in furthering inclusion of the decent work pillars in UNCT activities. Where ILO advocacy and presence was weak, the likelihood was higher of decent work being viewed as an ILO-only priority rather than an issue of system-wide concern.

56. A committed and knowledgeable resident coordinator can and does play an important role in infusing a decent work lens into UNCT deliberations. Where they are unfamiliar with or insufficiently trained on the decent work agenda, a significant opportunity is lost to further awareness and understanding of decent work among United Nations system entities at the country level. Stronger ILO involvement during the resident coordinator induction programme would be desirable in this regard.

57. With the ongoing global economic downturn characterized by stagnating or receding growth and grim projections for the immediate future, few countries can afford not to prioritize employment creation (decent work pillar 1) and it subsequently featured in most UNDAFs. However, to what extent the jobs created qualify as "decent work", particularly in least developed and lower-middle-income countries, remains to be assessed.

58. Most national governments consider social protection (decent work pillar 2) to be the United Nations system's strongest forte and comparative advantage and thus the area in which it could be of greatest value added to national development endeavours. Subsequently social protection related initiatives are well reflected in the UNDAF's for these countries and have progressively taken on greater importance in such documents.

59. The value added and inherent relevance of fundamental principles and rights at work and International Labour Standards (decent work pillar 3) to sustainable and inclusive growth and the contribution that the United Nations system can make to that end was not grasped on a consistent basis by national governments. While UNDAFs for countries on the higher end of the development spectrum tended to encompass that pillar adequately, it was somewhat less visible in UNDAFs for countries in lower development categories.

60. The promotion of social dialogue (decent work pillar 4) was non-existent in most UNDAFs. It was viewed at best as an aspirational goal but for most countries was far from constituting a priority area in UNDAFs. United Nations system entities even largely perceived that pillar as an exclusive ILO objective and its link to the other three pillars of decent work was by and large not well understood.

61. Neither UNDAFs nor their progress reports provided detailed breakdowns on resource allocations for decent work related activities. At best, approximations could be made from resource allocation targets for outcomes whose constituent elements — either partially or in their entirety — directly or indirectly related to the decent work

pillars. Based on such estimations, it was apparent that in most UNDAFs, social protection (pillar 2) received the highest allocation among the four pillars of decent work.

62. Most UNDAFs revealed an impressive array of individual initiatives undertaken by a large number of UNCT members on the first three pillars of decent work. While that finding was indicative of a meaningful level of decent work mainstreaming by the United Nations system entities at the country level, such a finding was moderated by the fact that few of the entities consciously realized that they were promoting decent work and as such did not consider it in conceptualizing, planning and implementing their activities.

63. For the five countries for which case studies have been prepared, five United Nations system entities (ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF) had undertaken multiple initiatives either on their own or jointly to further one or more decent work pillars. Closely behind was UN-Women, which could be considered as a key player in at least three countries. Additionally, FAO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and WFP could be considered as key players in one to two countries reviewed. Five other agencies had made useful albeit more limited contributions in four (WHO), three (OHCHR, UNHCR, UNODC) and two (UNESCO) countries respectively.

64. Joint programmes on decent work related issues were far more likely to occur in countries that had adopted the Delivering as One platform. Such programmes also provided a useful platform for ILO to further conceptual understanding of decent work among the participating organizations. However, inter-agency and inter-ministerial cooperation can at times become challenging in countries where programmatic activities and their funding are determined by line ministries.

65. For the five countries for which case studies had been prepared, depending on the country context, sustainability of decent work related initiatives was subject to uncertainty due to a variety of factors. An oft-cited common concern was recurrent national elections that created uncertainties as to whether a new government would continue to prioritize certain decent work-related pillars. Countries that had recently graduated to a higher development category also faced the realities of cutbacks in donor funding and the prospect of financing decent work related initiatives from their own sources. Further, countries whose economies were heavily dependent on exports or remittances were particularly vulnerable to global economic downturns creating uncertainties as to how they could sustain social spending programmes when faced with unexpected shocks.

66. The findings of post-2015 consultations in a number of countries reviewed made it clear that certain decent work pillars would take on increasing importance in the coming years. Foremost among those was social protection given the growing recognition of inclusive growth in most countries. Job creation would also remain a priority, particularly furthering youth employment and vocational education and training and reducing the informal economy.

IV. Overall analysis on the level of mainstreaming in the United Nations organizations

67. Generally, the mainstreaming of the decent work agenda into the activities of United Nations system organizations had met with moderate success. There were extensive variations within the organizations in which some of them illustrated a high

level of mainstreaming whereas others had not consciously undertaken any activities relating to decent work.

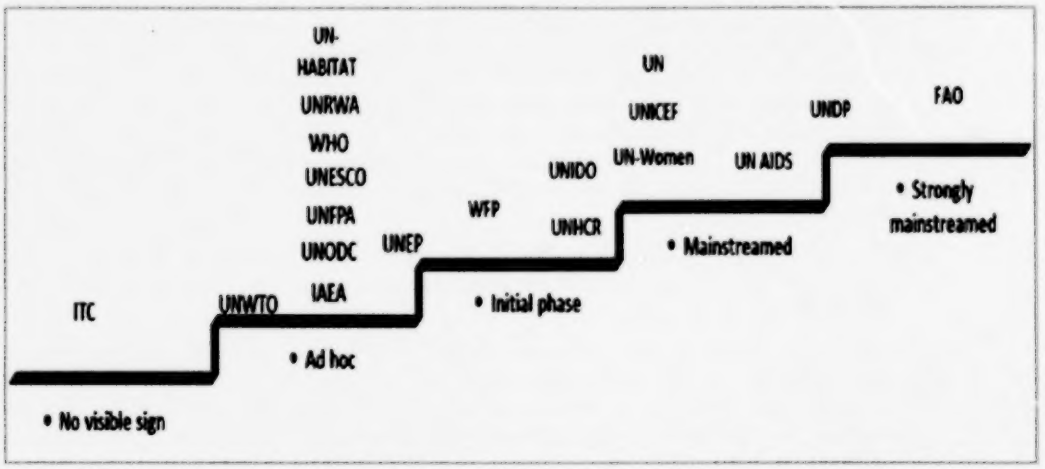
68. An overall analysis of individual United Nations organizations was conducted using the 10 factors to illustrate their level of mainstreaming. The mandates of each organization, as self-reported, past work through the toolkit, and level of overall awareness of decent work were also taken into consideration. Assessment of the organization on mainstreaming should not be seen as a competition among organizations, but rather showed the level of performance in achieving the stated objectives of the decent work agenda as a concept. The Inspectors did not consider that all United Nations organizations should belong to the highest level of mainstreaming.

69. Based on the above-mentioned analysis, the Inspectors placed the organizations into five categories:

- **No visible sign of mainstreaming:** there was no evidence that any activity/thinking had taken place on decent work
- **Ad hoc actions on decent work:** there were some activities consistent with decent work, focused on implementing organizational mandates having an impact on decent work, but those were not conceptualized or understood to be part of decent work and thus not integrated in a coherent fashion
- **Initial phase of mainstreaming:** the organization had begun working on decent work and was conceptualizing its work as part of and contributing to decent work and was making efforts towards a more systematic response
- **Mainstreamed:** the organization, given its mandate, had mainstreamed decent work concepts into the technical areas of its work. Decent work was part of its strategic plans/planning documents
- **Strongly mainstreamed:** the organization had held discussions at the board level and/or expanded its mandate to make decent work an integral part of its strategic plans and planning documents. The concept of decent work was also embedded in the programming cycle and guidance documents had been disseminated throughout the organization linking decent work to the organizational units of its headquarters and to their field activities.

70. Differences were made in the graph below between organizations that were at the higher end of each category and those that the Inspectors concluded were moving up into the next category. Therefore the placement of each organization on the five-step scale specifically denoted where they fell on the scale.

Graph 1: Overall analysis of level of mainstreaming by United Nations system organizations



71. The analysis showed that most (almost 50 per cent, 9 out of 19) of the United Nations system organizations that participated in this review could be placed in the category of "ad hoc initiatives" on decent work. Organizations such as IAEA, UNFPA, UNODC, UNRWA and WHO had very specific areas of work, which comprised decent work issues. In the case of IAEA and WHO those related to the third pillar on standards and rights at work and social protection. For UNODC and UNRWA the activities observed by the Inspectors relating to decent work were on the first pillar of employment creation and enterprise development. UNFPA showed strong work relating to the second pillar on social protection. UNWTO was placed in transition between no visible sign and the ad hoc initiatives group because, although it worked on a very specific sector of sustainable tourism to eliminate poverty, it had a mandate to work on all four pillars of the decent work agenda and the Inspectors deemed that it could make more of an effort to incorporate decent work into its work.

72. UNEP was placed in a transitioning category from ad hoc to initial phase given that its environmental, social and economic sustainability policy framework which provided safeguard standards on labour and working conditions was still in draft form and reflecting work in progress. UNEP had undertaken various ad hoc activities relating to decent work such as environmental, social and economic sustainability and transitioning to a green economy, however a specific conceptualization and link to decent work was not as explicit as it could have been.

73. There were three organizations that were considered to be in the initial phases of mainstreaming, with WFP being at the lower end of the spectrum. There were several activities taking place in WFP relating to decent work but those were not consolidated and conceptualized as such. As WFP had begun to shift its mandate to food assistance and development from humanitarian food aid, it had opportunities to take decent work into account in its work and strategic plans and policies. For example, the Purchase for Progress programme which was locally to source the food which WFP bought for its feeding programmes (locally sourced procurement), and the more traditional school feeding programmes had led to local employment opportunities as a by-product of its working in a specific sector.

74. UNHCR and UNIDO were currently in the initial phases of mainstreaming but moving up to the mainstreamed group. There were several references to decent work

in the UNIDO strategic plans; however, the people working on the issues relating to decent work were not consciously doing so as a contribution or in relation to the decent work agenda. They reported a mandate only in the first pillar on employment. However, decent work was of relevance to that organization so more could be done to systematize it throughout its activities. At UNHCR, there were sector specific technical activities on decent work such as livelihoods and economic recovery of its target population. Incorporation of decent work more explicitly in the ongoing revision of the livelihoods manuals and guidance would be an opportunity for UNHCR to be more systematic about the link between its work and the decent work agenda.

75. The Inspectors found that UNAIDS, UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Secretariat and UN-Women had all mainstreamed decent work in their organizations within their respective mandates.

76. The United Nations Secretariat (DESA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the regional commissions) had included decent work in its strategic plans and programmes and had identified a focal point for decent work. The Secretariat had encouraged and supported decent work through its work with the functional commissions that it served, and there were several examples of activities undertaken by them on decent work. However, more work to mainstream it systematically throughout all Secretariat entities was needed and there was a gap in the availability of guidance to the Secretariat entities on overall orientation on how to mainstream decent work and how various areas of work were linked to it.

77. Given the UNICEF mandate (which was reported to be on pillar 2 social protection only), UNICEF had mainstreamed the part of the decent work agenda relevant to its mandate well. It was perhaps however at the beginning phase, as there was no systematic knowledge nor awareness raising and there were possibilities of exploring how other parts of the agenda could relate to its work beyond social protection.

78. UN-Women was established in July 2010 and was not in existence at the time of the Economic and Social Council resolutions and the subsequent follow-up by CEB. Nevertheless, it had mainstreamed decent work into its strategic plans and there was evidence of a conscious effort to use the lens of decent work in its work especially in the field of economic empowerment, and decent work was an integral part of its research and policy analysis. Several guidance and policy briefs making the explicit link between decent work and women's empowerment and/or social protection of women had been developed and were embedded in the analysis that it prepared.

79. UNAIDS was unique in the sense that through its co-sponsor ILO, the programme had undertaken much work on decent work for people living with and affected by HIV and related efforts on workplace discrimination, testing and awareness-raising. UNAIDS has worked on discrimination and workplace rights (pillar 3) and on social protection (pillar 2). The political commitment shown by the senior level management of UNAIDS was very high evidenced by the numerous statements made at Board level and at other international forums.

80. UNDP was placed at the high end of the mainstreamed category moving into the strongly mainstreamed group due to the inclusion of decent work-related concepts in its strategic plans and programme documents; it had undertaken activities relating to decent work alone and in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, had developed guidance documents on decent work-related concepts and worked on

guidance for the country level to take into account decent work elements at the UNDAF level. Interestingly, direct reference and use of the terminology "decent work" was rare in UNDP documents; however, the Inspectors recognized that what was included was in line with the decent work concept. A future opportunity could be for UNDP to make its work explicit to the decent work agenda.

81. The Inspectors found that FAO as an organization could be identified as having strongly mainstreamed decent work. The Inspectors found that FAO had fulfilled the most factors of the 10 that had been identified. The Inspectors felt that more work could be done within the organization in the area of knowledge-sharing mechanisms on decent work. A focal point had been named and many publications and toolkits developed, but it was not clear to what extent they were being used and whether lessons from one technical sector were being shared with those in other departments. FAO took the issue of decent rural employment to their Board for its approval, based on the understanding that it needed to expand its mandate to work on decent work, and that led to incorporating decent work successfully into its strategic plans and guidance documents for its implementation. The staff interviewed in Rome and some at the field level were well aware of decent work, which was generally not the case in other organizations. With the new strategic framework, which included decent work elements, it was expected that it would have firmly embedded decent work in its organizational work.

V. Lessons learned

82. **The lessons learned described below are derived from the general findings, conclusions and analysis from the review of mainstreaming the decent work agenda that have a wider applicability in the activities of the United Nations system, in particular in the context of the ongoing discussions and future implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

83. **Need for a well-articulated governance and accountability framework:** the Economic and Social Council resolutions and CEB decisions on mainstreaming the decent work agenda were a useful vehicle to bring that issue to the attention of decision makers in member States and the executive management of the United Nations organizations. However, the lack of a well-defined mechanism for implementation and monitoring of the mainstreaming of decent work has hindered the efficient translation of the high-level political commitment into concrete actions. CEB did not create such a mechanism for mainstreaming the decent work agenda, nor was ILO mandated to play such a role. Other multisectoral issues would benefit from using the above platforms to raise the awareness of a variety of stakeholders. A robust monitoring and accountability framework/mechanism is required to ensure that political decisions are followed up on through appropriate implementation actions.

84. **Leadership and commitment in system wide initiative is imperative:** Executive heads and CEB member agencies did not explicitly express themselves on the relevance of the decent work agenda to their organizational mandates and field of activities. Lack of documentation on this subject made it difficult to understand whether the agenda was not dealt with by an organization because of a lack of senior management commitment or because it was perceived as irrelevant to the organizational mandate. In future, when a multisectoral initiative is to be embraced by the system, the executive heads of the CEB member agencies should carefully examine the topic and indicate whether the issue will be of relevance to their respective organizational mandates. In cases where there is no or little relevance, and

the intention is not to work on the issue, this should be clearly announced and the implementation mechanism should be developed accordingly.

85. **Resolutions issued by member States should be differentiated and fit for purpose:** The Inspectors found that organizations are confronted by multiple, often competing, requests to mainstream a wide range of issues. This creates situations where it is not possible to mainstream all of them thoroughly and they are seen by staff members as competing demands. The practice of global overarching requests and mandates directed at all organizations of the United Nations system without differentiation and one that does not take into consideration the relevance of the issue against organizational mandates should be kept for a very select few. Given the human and financial constraints faced by the system, it is unrealistic to expect all organizations to be able to respond to various requests to mainstream all issues equally.

86. **Importance of translating global initiatives to regional level:** Regional commissions play an important role in bringing political commitments formulated and accepted at the global level onto the domestic public agenda of the member States of their respective regions. The form of assistance undertaken by the commissions heavily depends on the specific demands of the member States of each region. The lack of well-articulated tasks and role attribution in the Economic and Social Council functional commissions resulted in an inadequate follow-up and approach to their implementation, thus leading to missed opportunities.

87. **Main drivers of successes at country level:** At the country level, national government prioritization had the most impact on mainstreaming the decent work agenda into UNDAFs, followed by the initiatives of proactive and knowledgeable resident coordinators and ILO country offices (as the agency having a priority role in promoting the agenda). This would indicate that in mainstreaming other initiatives into UNDAFs, priority attention should be paid to the stakeholders, with the role of the lead agency varying depending on the issue under consideration.

88. **Continuous awareness and learning process:** Missed opportunities to mainstream decent work were observed due to the lack of a sustained awareness-raising strategy. Such a strategy is a basic requirement in ensuring a common understanding and a high level of awareness across the system at all levels. This is particularly imperative when organizations need to act on other upcoming, complex, multidisciplinary subjects.

89. **Flexibility to accommodate emerging needs and initiatives:** Mainstreaming activities, which are highly in line with organizational mandates, are the obvious priority; however, there were also successful efforts to refocus some of the activities taking into account the decent work agenda. At times, in the case of new system-wide initiatives, it may be necessary for organizations to review and shift their strategic focus to better address commonly agreed initiatives or goals. Drawing attention to this in boards and governing bodies would allow organizations to work on such "new" areas of work with legitimacy and governing and legislative bodies should be open to such discussions.

90. **Need for lead agency(ies) to drive mutual learning among organizations:** United Nations organizations, whose mandates are the most relevant to a given issue, play an important role in raising awareness and promoting a common understanding among those organizations that may have more limited awareness of the issue. No organization was requested to perform that function for mainstreaming the decent work agenda. Awareness-raising and training activities should be across the system,

including at the country level, and sustained (rather than one-off ad hoc initiatives) in order to take into account high staff turnover. Organizations requested to play such a role require the necessary resources to carry out such work.

91. **Integration into individual organization institutional frameworks:** United Nations initiatives decided or endorsed at the system-wide level must be reflected in the policy and strategic framework/planning level documents of the individual organizations in order to create an enabling environment where meaningful mainstreaming can take place. Implementation of activities remains disjointed and ad hoc if it does not receive orientation and become part of the results-based framework of the organizations at both headquarter and field levels. This is most evident at the country level where a large number of United Nations system entities are undertaking a wide range of initiatives in the UNDAF framework, but they miss out on developing synergies due to disjointed efforts resulting from a lack of common conceptual understanding and no commonly formulated policies or strategies.

92. **Need for a focal point function:** There are only a few organizations with a focal point function/person on the decent work agenda, while gender mainstreaming examples show that a responsible unit/person within each organization whose work most closely relates to the issue is required to help coordinate such activities. Horizontal cooperation and networking within and across organizations are required to ensure a continued and sustainable response to embed overarching global initiatives into organizational activities. A well-functioning network of these focal points across the system would contribute to ensuring and strengthening coherence among United Nations organizations.

93. **Delivering as One as a useful framework for success in coherence and complementarities:** At the country level, the establishment of a Delivering as One framework presents a clear opportunity to further inter-agency cooperation through joint programming on issues of cross-cutting importance such as the decent work agenda. Each agency could contribute with its particular technical expertise, even with relatively modest financial implications, to an initiative that may not be entirely circumscribed within its traditional strategic focus. This may be a useful message for other system-wide initiatives.

94. **Mainstreaming initiatives are not cost-free:** Initiatives to mainstream complex issues are not without cost. They need to be supported by dedicated resources (financial and human) at the global and country levels. The establishment of common funds has been particularly conducive in the case of the latter. The usual approach of "do it within existing resources" without specific allocation or prioritization is not conducive to meaningful results and is considered a crucial lesson to be taken into account for future successful implementation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

VI. Recommendations

95. **Recommendation 1: The Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) should initiate a review of how United Nations system organizations can contribute to promoting employment and decent work related issues in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. The CEB response should identify the participatory and accountability framework and monitor its implementation.**

96. **Recommendation 2: The Secretary-General should direct the secretariats of the functional commissions who have not yet done so to review the implementation of the decent work provisions of the Economic and Social Council resolutions and to identify areas of their work that could benefit from a decent work lens.**

97. **Recommendation 3: The Secretary-General should instruct the heads of regional commissions to review their activities with a decent work lens and determine how their work can better support countries in their regions towards the achievement of decent work for all.**

98. **Recommendation 4: The Economic and Social Council should follow a more consistent approach and ensure accountability to its subsidiary organs and their supportive management when following-up on Council decisions.**

99. **Recommendation 5: The ILO governing body should request the Director-General of ILO to carry out more proactive awareness-raising and training activities among the staff of United Nations system organizations in collaboration with the International Training Centre of ILO (ITC-ILO) and other training units in the United Nations system in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and identify resources in this regard.**

100. **Recommendation 6: Executive heads of United Nations system organizations should instruct their respective technical units to re-examine their work to identify if there are areas where the decent work agenda can be linked to their activities and to make existing linkages more explicit. Such organizations may wish to cooperate with ILO for support in this process.**

101. **Recommendation 7: The Secretary-General should ensure that the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office and the United Nations System Staff College undertake appropriate awareness-raising and provide guidance and training to the resident coordinators and United Nations country team members to further a common understanding of the decent work agenda in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.**

VII. The way forward

102. Review of the Economic and Social Council resolutions on mainstreaming the decent work agenda into the activities of United Nations system organizations showed the limited impact of politically justified and unanimously supported United Nations resolutions. There were results achieved and some organizations have undertaken commendable efforts to mainstream decent work; however, overall, the system's response was of moderate success. The resolutions required the accompaniment of more robust means of monitoring their implementation and better attribution of responsibility and accountability was needed. Furthermore, a proper funding mechanism to provide the resources for mainstreaming decent work should have been formulated.

103. It is to be noted that while member States unanimously supported the Economic and Social Council resolutions on decent work in the Council forum, they did not replicate the same level of attention and support in governing bodies and legislative bodies across all United Nations system organizations. Thus, some organizations were not mandated to work on, much less prioritize, the decent work agenda in their work programmes. Consistency of the messages sent by member States to and across the various United Nations system forums should be enhanced. Member States are

expected to promote and ensure a consistent approach in the governing bodies of different United Nations system organizations and entities concerning the global initiatives approved at the General Assembly level, thus strengthening the coherence of the system's activity.

104. Decent work and full employment continue to be on global and national agenda. The potential inclusion of decent work in the Sustainable Development Goals would indicate widespread acceptance of its importance in both global and national agenda. ILO should take such acceptance as a call for more proactive efforts to raise awareness, advocate and ensure a common understanding of decent work across the United Nations system and among its constituents. The experience of the present report should be used in addressing the subject of employment and decent work within the context of the SDGs.

105. The findings, recommendations and lessons learned from this evaluation should be considered as a call to the member States, executive management of the United Nations organizations and the United Nations staff at large to better meet the requests of the key stakeholders and partners in the post-2015 agenda.

Annex

Overview of actions to be taken by participating organizations on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

JIU/REP/2015/1

		Intended impact	United Nations, its funds and programmes																Specialized agencies and IAEA													
			CEB	United Nations*	UNCTAD	ITC	UNDP	UNEP	UNFPA	UN-Habitat	UNHCR	UNICEF	UNODC	UNOPS	UNRWA	UN-Women	WFP	FAO	IAEA	ICAO	ILO	IMO	ITU	UNAIDS	UNESCO	UNIDO	UNWTO	UPU	WHO	WIPO	WMO
Report	For action		☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒
	For information		☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Recommendation 1		f	E																												
Recommendation 2		f		E																											
Recommendation 3		f		E																											
Recommendation 4		c		L																											
Recommendation 5		d																		L											
Recommendation 6		f		E	E	E		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	E		E	E		E	E	E	E	E		E
Recommendation 7		c		E																											

Legend: **L:** Recommendation for decision by legislative organ **E:** Recommendation for action by executive head.

▩: Recommendation does not require action by this organization.

Intended impact: **a:**enhanced transparency and accountability **b:** dissemination of good/best practices **c:** enhanced coordination and cooperation **d:** strengthened coherence and harmonization **e:** enhanced control and compliance **f:** enhanced effectiveness **g:** significant financial savings **h:** enhanced efficiency **i:** other.

* Covers all entities listed in ST/SGB/2002/11 other than UNCTAD, UNODC, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNRWA.

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Seventy-first year

Letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit for your consideration a non-paper by the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations containing a summary of the ideas and proposals from participants in the open debate held on 20 October 2015 by the Spanish presidency of the Security Council on implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) (see annex).

I should like to take this opportunity to express the deep gratitude of Spain to all the States non-members of the Security Council for their participation in and contributions to the discussion, as well as to the members of the Council who, through a presidential statement, expressed the intention of the Council to take more direct responsibility for the implementation of previously agreed decisions on working methods, and in the development of best practices.

The non-paper is based on the summary presented by the presidency at the conclusion of the open debate. By summarizing the prevailing views within the United Nations membership, concrete and operational proposals and ways to improve the working methods of the Security Council, Spain hopes to promote an ongoing commitment in this area and bridge the gap between decisions and implementation, both in the Council and in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 120, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Roman **Oyarzun**

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Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

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I. Introduction

A. The working methods of the Security Council: an issue that concerns the entire membership

During the open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, held on 20 October 2015 under the presidency of Spain, the vast majority of speakers underlined the usefulness of such annual debates and the significant interest of the membership in the working methods of the Council and its decision-making process. Such interest was also shown by the number of participants at the meeting (54 speakers[1] on behalf of 162 Member States or observers: see footnotes 2, 3, 4 and 5 for details).

Among the various reasons behind the interest, the Deputy Secretary-General mentioned the high expectations of the Council and the United Nations as a whole around the world. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) pointed out that the annual open debate was about much more than just the working methods of the Council. It was about the decision-making culture and the effectiveness of the Council, and went to the heart of its performance. Another argument was put forward by the President of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, who recalled that the full United Nations membership had conferred on the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that the Council acted on the membership's behalf in carrying out its duties. Along this line, Lithuania added that, while only 15 Council members prescribe and set legally binding norms, all 193 Member States have to implement their decisions.

There was also a unanimous call for the action of the Council to be guided by the principles of transparency, inclusivity, accountability and efficiency. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), believed that a more effective, representative and transparent Council that could adequately respond to the current challenges was needed, and the United States of America underlined that with the current disparate and complex threats to international peace and security, the Council has an obligation to consider how to adapt and improve its functions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela proposed to find effective formulas to promote greater transparency and inclusivity, if the expectations of the members of the Organization were to be met and their collective interests reflected. Sweden, as the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, asked for more integrated, coherent and holistic action from the Council, and Italy recalled the growing demand for effective multilateralism. Thailand stated the need for the

[1] Angola, United States of America, Chad, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lithuania, China, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nigeria, Russian Federation, France, Sweden, Switzerland (as coordinator of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Colombia, Poland, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Japan, Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Egypt, Estonia (making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General, on behalf of the ACT Group), Australia, Indonesia, Liechtenstein (making additional remarks on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, on behalf of the ACT Group), Holy See, Islamic Republic of Iran, Singapore, Uruguay, Sierra Leone, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Panama, Czech Republic, Peru, Pakistan, Cuba, Ukraine, Argentina, Algeria, South Africa, Nepal, Rwanda, Kuwait, Sudan, Tunisia and Republic of Korea.

Council and its subsidiary bodies to be efficient and transparent, ensure inclusive participation and be accountable in order to be effective.

For China, the holding of the open debate on the working methods of the Council fully reflected the positive attitude and willingness of the Council to draw on the opinions of the wider membership to further improve its work, while the Russian Federation recalled that the working methods themselves and decisions on their possible modification are the preserve of the Council.

B. Room for improvement

Despite some recent working method improvements mentioned by the United States, such as the clarification of the role of penholders, the revamp of the handover process from one subsidiary organ Chair to the next and the promotion of dialogue with United Nations bodies, and some progress in the frequency of public meetings, the flow of information to non-members of the Council and the interaction with non-traditional leaders, including representatives from civil society, as indicated by Chad, Nigeria, Switzerland (on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT Group)), Mexico and Egypt, there is still much room for improvement.

II. Transparency

A. Open debates

1. Open debates as a tool for the Security Council to assess the interactivity and effectiveness of its action and gather the views of the wider membership

As Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out, open debates and public briefings serve to make the Council more open to the wider membership, strengthening the buy-in and the legitimacy of its decisions. Portugal emphasized that they can prove very useful for listening to the general membership's views on various subjects and situations relevant to peace and security and, on the other hand, for enabling Member States to better understand the measures the Council adopts and helping to strengthen their commitment to their full implementation.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain) argued that more focus and interactivity are needed in order to ensure that open debates are a useful forum for exchanging views between the Council and the rest of the Organization. They need to be more than a platform for States to record national positions.

Furthermore, several speakers called for meaningful follow-up by the Council of the views expressed by the wider membership during such meetings, including in its "products". Concrete proposals are detailed in section III regarding the Council's efficiency in general, and in section VI pertaining specifically to the open debates on working methods.

2. Need to make open debates more efficient

In order to make open debates more efficient, Portugal pinpointed a target of concluding a productive debate in a single half day session by focusing on the messages deemed important.

The concept note for the debate (S/2015/793, annex) allotted 10 minutes to joint statements by groups, 3 minutes to national statements and only 2 minutes to national statements complementing joint statements. Most members welcomed this practice and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised the need to stick to schedules and keep statements to the agreed-on length. However, Nepal and India said that Council members should set an honourable precedent for non-members by making concise and meaningful speeches, rather than asking them to abbreviate their statements on important issues.

In line with the recommendation by the presidency to deliver joint statements, the Netherlands spoke also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, Sweden on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement,[2] Kuwait on behalf of the Group of Arab States,[3] Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States,[4] and Switzerland as the coordinator of the ACT Group, a cross-regional group of 25 countries.[5] France and Germany delivered a joint statement and Angola spoke also on behalf of Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain, six Council members from six different regions of the world, an initiative which the Russian

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[2] Non-Aligned Movement members (120 as at April 2015): Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[3] Group of Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

[4] Group of African States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[5] ACT Group members: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay. Switzerland is the coordinator of the Group.

Federation qualified as a genuine revolution in the working methods of the Council and asked to be supported.

Other proposals to improve the open debates were made by Lithuania, which suggested that more thought should be given to structuring open debates better in order to avoid having ministers from countries that are not Council members addressing the Council with an audience of junior experts there to listen, and by India, which asked for transparency in determining the list of speakers.

B. Other proposals to promote greater transparency

1. Political will to implement the working methods

Throughout the debate, delegations conveyed their appreciation for the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and its different chairmanships, and recalled the guidance provided to the Council by the numerous presidential notes. In that regard, Pakistan stated that improvements in the working methods of the Council were due in no small measure to the persistent efforts of its non-permanent members.

However, some delegations, such as the United Kingdom, Kazakhstan and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), pointed out that, besides having good working methods, what is really needed is the political will to use them effectively. In that regard, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that presidential notes are couched in vague language and often not applied, and that some Council members even resist implementing them. That reflects the disconnect between the Council's working methods, the annual open debate on working methods and the Informal Working Group. To bridge that gap, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

2. Formalization of the provisional rules of procedure

The issue of the rules of procedure of the Security Council was also brought up in the context of achieving greater transparency, with Pakistan considering it unfortunate that, to date, they remain provisional. For their part, Cuba, Algeria, Singapore, Sierra Leone (on behalf of the Group of African States), Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Costa Rica requested the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council to be formalized in order to improve the transparency and accountability of the Council's work, regulate it and put an end to the excessively discretional nature of its actions.

However, Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), recalled that meaningful changes are driven by practice, by taking the initiative and leading by example as much as by rules and procedure. In that regard, the six Council members stated that the Council will improve its performance by adapting its working methods in innovative ways to meet the needs of specific cases.

Rwanda pointed out that, while waiting for the adoption of definitive rules of procedure, various notes on the working methods of the Council will greatly

contribute to a more transparent, democratic and effective Council, provided that they are implemented in good faith.

3. More public meetings of the Security Council

The ACT Group and Thailand welcomed the efforts of the Council to hold open meetings, and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Argentina called for open or public meetings to be convened more frequently, in order to enable countries, particularly those whose cases are under consideration, to contribute to the discussion. Kazakhstan said there should be genuine, meaningful interaction among Member States rather than prepared statements that are read out. Along the same line, Peru requested the public meetings to be substantive meetings and held at the appropriate time, and Costa Rica urged non-permanent members to use all means at their disposal to ensure that the Council increases both its transparency and its effective engagement with other relevant stakeholders.

Going even further, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Brazil, Cuba, Paraguay, Tunisia and Turkey asked for closed meetings and informal consultations to be kept to a minimum and be the exception rather than the rule.

4. Added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues

Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and the United Kingdom stressed the need for having more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Many delegations, such as France and Germany, the ACT Group, Australia, Turkey, Algeria, the Republic of Korea and Tunisia, underlined the added value of Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues. The United States stated that Arria-formula meetings provide an important venue for the Council to hear views beyond those of Member States and constitute a way to inform itself informally about the difficult issues on its agenda.

The Russian Federation, despite advocating improved coordination of the activities of the Council with the broadest possible circle of Member States, argued that, in recent years, there has been a growing trend to use such meetings to stage propaganda spectacles in which certain delegations seek to promote their own unilateral positions, and called for the use of the Arria formula exclusively for its original end of providing greater clarity to the Council with respect to situations on its agenda.

5. Increased flow of information to non-members of the Council: presidency's briefings and wrap-up sessions, monthly assessments and annual and special reports

The seeking of information and understanding regarding the Council's activities remains a crucial and legitimate request.

In that regard, the Sudan recalled the note by the President of the Security Council on the reform of procedural matters (S/2010/507) and the fact that making the Council's daily agenda available and circulating the monthly journal to all States Members are priorities. It also conveyed appreciation for the efforts of those

Member States that, while taking over the presidency of the Council, organized a briefing to present the monthly agenda. In the same vein, the ACT Group, Algeria, France and Germany, Mexico, Thailand and Tunisia requested the members of the Council to continue the practice of providing wrap-up meetings and informal briefing sessions to non-members.

Regarding the Security Council monthly assessments, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, called upon the Council to ensure that they are comprehensive and analytical and issued in a timely fashion. In this respect, the Non-Aligned Movement suggested that the General Assembly consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

Although credit was given to the annual report of the Security Council as an important source of information to non-members, the President of the General Assembly took the opportunity to recollect the calls from Member States for further improvement of its analytical quality. With that aim, Pakistan requested that the annual report be substantive, argued that meaningful interaction between the Council and the Assembly on it would be helpful and signalled that taking up some of the proposals set out in the letter written in 2014 by the President of the Assembly in that regard could be a good beginning. Paraguay, Rwanda and Thailand indicated that it should be more than a collection of resolutions and statistics and a summary of meetings and decisions adopted, and include assessments of its effectiveness and ways forward with concrete recommendations. Along the same line, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Algeria and Cuba asked for the annual report to be more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical, for it to assess the work of the Council, include also the cases in which the Council had failed to act, the views expressed by members during the consideration of the agenda items and the circumstances under which the Council adopted the various outcomes. Lithuania also suggested taking a fresh look at the possibilities of adjusting the structure of the annual report of the Council in line with the realities of the information age.

The Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Cuba further requested the Council to submit special reports for the consideration of the Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations.

Furthermore, regarding information from Member States to the Council, Guatemala voiced concern about the increase in the number of letters sent to the presidency of the Council with the aim of justifying military action taken in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, arguing that the members should question whether such communications genuinely comply with the obligation under the Charter to report immediately any action taken under that provision, as well as the legality of their open format.

6. Greater transparency of the subsidiary organs

The request for greater transparency extended also to the subsidiary organs of the Council. The aim is to enable the wider membership to have a better understanding of what those bodies do, raise awareness, provide a platform for sharing good practices and improve implementation, whether of sanctions regimes or counter-terrorism measures.

Lithuania and India indicated that the practice of the sanctions committees' Chairs briefing the Council in public should become standard and that the Counter-Terrorism Committee should engage with the membership. Moreover, sanctions committees should engage actively with the countries concerned and their neighbours and with relevant regional actors. The Chairs of subsidiary bodies should also visit the countries concerned and make better use of press statements and other forms of media engagement. Lithuania further suggested that press statements and other forms of media engagement by relevant subsidiary bodies or their Chairs — although the practice is not common — offer additional avenues for outreach and disseminating relevant information and should be further explored.

For their part, Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) and Kuwait (on behalf of the Group of Arab States) stated that subsidiary organs should function in a manner that provides adequate and timely information on their activities to the broad United Nations membership. Moreover, Cuba argued that non-members of the Council should have access to the subsidiary bodies, including the right to participate in their discussions.

Pakistan called for a transparent process leading to a balanced representation on the Council's expert panels, and Argentina underlined the need to respect due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons.

Both Argentina and Pakistan underlined the need for the Office of the Ombudsperson to be strengthened and said that there is no justification for limiting its role to only one sanctions committee.

Citing a different approach, Portugal suggested that the Council could also channel interaction through the subsidiary bodies, such as the sanctions committees and working groups, particularly those on peacekeeping and conflict prevention, and proposed that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger development agenda.

III. A more efficient Security Council

There was wide consensus on the need for a more action-oriented and efficient Security Council. In this connection, Chad stated that the absence of any progress in certain crises clearly demonstrates that the organ is not efficiently and responsibly fulfilling its mandate as it addresses the challenges of the twenty-first century. Indonesia, and Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), echoed the same concern, that the Council is clearly falling short of its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. Several situations were mentioned to illustrate the Council's failure to live up to those expectations, including the cases of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Chad, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia) and the situations in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, and currently in the Syrian Arab Republic (mentioned by Liechtenstein).

A. Improving the decision-making process

Different proposals were thus made to enhance the efficiency of the Council, with Angola, speaking on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), calling for the Council to throw off some of the constrictions that have cramped even the way it discusses matters, let alone how it makes decisions.

1. The need for more political focus and for invigorating the consultations

To that aim, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), requested working methods that produce effective political focus in the Council's work and, in that regard, called for more discipline and restraint in the range of initiatives considered or taken by the Council, many of which distract the Council from real problem-solving.

At the same time, the United Kingdom noted how formal the working methods could be, recalling that even in the allegedly informal meetings of the Council there were too many prepared speeches and too few genuine discussions. For its part, Lithuania asked for the "interactive" to be put back into the interactive debates, and for the Council to engage in genuine exchanges not limited to the reading of prepared statements.

Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, criticized the inconsistency of the Council's decisions by its demonstrated selectivity in addressing issues of grave concern to regional organizations.

2. Consensus should not be turned into 15 vetoes

A more efficient Council also means, as argued by Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), Australia and the United Kingdom, that deciding on procedural matters by consensus should not prevent the Council from taking the necessary action. Furthermore, it should not be elevated to the point where a 15-member veto was possible, not just in the Council itself, but also in its subsidiary bodies, including its sanctions committees.

3. Greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself

There were many voices demanding a more active role to be granted to non-permanent members in the work of the Council, be it through more inclusive consultations in the development of resolutions and presidential statements, the review of the penholdership system or more time for non-permanent members to prepare and be ready to deliver in the Council.

Consultations

Regarding consultations, China underlined that, before any action is taken, every effort should be made to reach consensus through patient negotiations among Council members so as to preserve the credibility and authority of the product at stake. For Egypt, the Council could benefit from more deliberations and consultations among its members.

Drafting of resolutions and presidential statements

The Czech Republic asked that the exchange with non-member States be intensified in drafting resolutions and presidential statements. Cuba stated that the Council's resolutions and presidential statements should reflect the views of Member States as expressed in the public debates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Cuba and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), agreed on the negative impact of the veto on the working methods of the Council, whereby elected members are routinely excluded for no reason other than habit. In the same vein, Paraguay deplored the treatment of certain items as reserved and withheld exclusively for the permanent members, considering it a discredit to the work of the multilateral system. Overall, the common denominator was the need for a more inclusive process of developing resolutions and presidential statements and for participation of both permanent and non-permanent members on an equal footing.

The penholdership system

The Russian Federation pointed out that the Council would benefit from a democratization of its work, facilitated by a more balanced distribution of obligations informally linked to the penholdership system. In that regard, it stated that certain Council members should not consider countries or even regions to be their exclusive purview or act as mentors on issues concerning those countries. Along this line, Chad considered the role of the penholder to be an anachronism and a form of guardianship that should be banished, together with Rwanda, which recalled the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2014/268), in which the right of any Council member to be a penholder was recognized. Both called for Council members representing the regions affected by conflicts on the Council's agenda to at least share the pen with the current penholders.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), together with Brazil, Pakistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), were of the view that the penholdership system has improved the Council's efficiency but has also diminished the opportunity for wider Council engagement, especially by the elected members, and has significantly increased the risk of Council products being crafted in a way that serves only the interests of the permanent members. Therefore, they encouraged changes to the penholdership system in order for it to regain a sense of ownership and collective responsibility over the Council's work, ensure necessary continuity by including permanent and elected members, and leverage members' relevant expertise, whether that be regional or through their chairmanship of subsidiary bodies or another source. For Italy, elected members could make a bigger contribution to the work of the Council by acting as a bridge to non-members of the Council and their concerns.

Other proposals were made by the ACT Group, which expressed its satisfaction that two countries on the Council had co-led visiting missions and suggested that the practice could serve as an example for the drafting of the products of the Council, and by Brazil, which recalled the positive experience of the Group of Friends of Haiti and indicated that it could be replicated. Pakistan linked the issue of the early election of non-permanent members to the penholdership system as a way to enable the Council to have more penholders from among the non-permanent members.

Transitional arrangements for newly elected Security Council members

The level of preparedness of incoming members of the Council was another area touched upon. The President of the General Assembly recalled the decision to conduct the elections of the non-permanent members of the Council six months before they assume their responsibilities, precisely with the aim of enabling the newcomers to better prepare for their two-year term on the Council. Along the same lines, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), also welcomed the decision to hold Council elections six months before the start of the new members' term, further emphasized the need for new non-permanent members to be prepared and mentioned the annual Finnish workshop, aimed at providing new members with an in-depth orientation in Council practice, procedures and working methods. Kazakhstan argued that, to perform effectively from the start, during the interim period after their election but before they take their seats, the elected members should be allowed to attend meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as informal consultations of the whole, in order to become acquainted with their new roles.

Chairs of subsidiary bodies

Pakistan said that the early election of non-permanent members will enable the Council to allocate the Chairs of subsidiary bodies in a timely manner. The importance of an early appointment of the Chairs of the Council's subsidiary bodies was also pointed out by the Deputy Secretary-General, who said that it is important that the new Chairs be able to hit the ground running, with solid knowledge of the work of their committees or working groups. He recalled that the Secretariat assists the outgoing Chairs in preparing documentation for the incoming Chairs.

Nevertheless, Chad called for a more open and inclusive process in the designation of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies and working groups, and Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, underlined the need to ensure continuity in the work of the subsidiary bodies. Lithuania considered that the handover from Chair to Chair should be better managed and streamlined and that closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies should be promoted.

Sanctions committees

Regarding the sanctions committees, some speakers, such as Thailand, recalled that sanctions are important tools for maintaining and restoring peace and security, and others, such as Chad, referred to the important role of the Council's subsidiary bodies.

Other speakers focused mainly on efficiency. The Russian Federation considered that the Council is increasingly pushed into adopting sanctions mechanisms by invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, but that the effectiveness of such decisions leaves a lot to be desired, as they often lead to merely worsening a crisis. For its part, China encouraged pushing for the diplomatic settlement of disputes and handling of crises and, wherever possible, avoiding simply resorting to the threat or use of sanctions. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela suggested that the sanctions committees should operate alongside an ongoing political process and thus have a clear end date, further stressed that objectives should be clearly circumscribed, and recalled that sanctions should be used neither as a political tool

against countries and peoples nor as an end unto themselves, but rather as an instrument bound to the solution of a given conflict.

In order to improve the efficiency of such instruments, Lithuania underlined the need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work and argued that visits by the Chairs of subsidiary bodies to the countries concerned should be further encouraged and that consideration should also be given, where appropriate, to closer cooperation among the Council's subsidiary bodies. Thailand asked for the application of clear criteria in listing and delisting and for streamlined communications with Member States to address the increasing number of sanctions-related issues.

Both Kazakhstan and Thailand suggested proper assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the sanctions regimes in order to minimize unintended economic and social consequences, with Thailand further proposing a research-based approach, including the use of statistical analysis to evaluate and quantify the impact and effectiveness of sanctions and to provide valuable guidance for future policymaking.

B. A better use of working methods in conflict prevention

Conflict prevention was a recurrent theme for most speakers. There was broad consensus on the needed revitalization of Chapter VI of the Charter to renew the focus on the peaceful settlement of disputes by promoting good offices and mediation efforts or, as Peru pointed out, to move from a conflict management approach to a prevention approach.

In that respect, Chad, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Russian Federation deplored the excessive and quick resort to Chapter VII of the Charter and called for full utilization of the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII for the pacific settlement of disputes, instead of simply resorting to the threat or use of such methods as sanctions.

Many delegations also insisted on the need for the Council to make better use of the tools at its disposal, including fully exploiting early warning mechanisms, in order to reinforce its preventive role when dealing with threats to peace and security. Side by side with the suggestions put forward in the context of the Council's relationship with other partners, be they United Nations entities or not, as laid out in section IV, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group and the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg) noted that horizon-scanning briefings, Arria-formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues could help to bring potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members. Lithuania and Australia recalled the usefulness of timely briefings or the use of the item "any other business" on threats, in line with Article 99 of the Charter, to strengthen the Council's preventive approach. For the United Kingdom, improved day-to-day interactions of the Council could lead to more time for horizon-scanning or for hearing from people on the ground, including through Arria-formula meetings. Likewise, doing more to connect the various parts of the United Nations and link the development agenda to the Council's work on peace and security would be a way to ensure that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts, but also about avoiding future ones.

C. Reviewing the power of veto

Nearly all Member States referred to the veto power.

The Russian Federation stated that it is unclear why the veto is sometimes criticized by representatives of countries or regions that, in the absence of the veto, would find themselves under massive pressure from a particular group of States, and suggested that they consider their own national interests. Mexico pointed out that the veto is a responsibility, not a privilege, and Kazakhstan stressed that it should be exercised with the greatest caution. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), noted that the veto may not be, strictly speaking, a working method, but that it has a significant negative impact — a cascade effect — on the working methods of the Council. Ukraine claimed that, if the veto is used, the permanent member resorting to it should explain the reasons for such action, in particular with regard to its consistency with the Charter of the United Nations, and called for the proper implementation of Article 27 (3) of the Charter, which obliges a party to a dispute to abstain from voting.

There was a broad call for the revision of the veto power by such countries as the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Rwanda and South Africa, which recalled the Elders initiatives. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela further considered that use of the veto has thwarted the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian State to be admitted as a full Member of the United Nations, despite the overwhelming support on the part of Organization's membership.

Australia asked for restraint on use of the veto and negative votes, while Indonesia and Cuba requested its abolishment and welcomed any steps to strictly regulate its use.

Numerous delegations (France and Germany, Lithuania, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, Japan, the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)) and Ukraine) reiterated their support to the initiative by France and Mexico to regulate the use of the veto in the case of the most serious crimes as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Brazil and Tunisia further welcomed the initiative and Chad, while conveying its support, requested that its contours be clarified, given that the holder of the right has the freedom to use it even in those exceptional conditions if it considers that its vital interests are threatened. Chad further added that, nonetheless, the best way to limit the misuse of the veto is through Charter reform.

The code of conduct of the ACT Group for Security Council actions against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes also gathered broad support, from the United Kingdom, France and Germany, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Guatemala, Japan, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Thailand, Italy, Singapore, Turkey, Panama, Peru and Ukraine.

Liechtenstein, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group on the issue of preventing or ending atrocity crimes, recalled that by committing to the code, States pledge that, while serving as members of the Council, they will support timely and decisive action by the Council to prevent or end atrocity crimes. They also pledge

more specifically not to vote against a credible draft resolution submitted to that end. In that respect, Singapore stressed that, if the permanent members of the Council feel they must use their right to veto, they should at least explain to the wider United Nations membership why they cannot support initiatives aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities. For its part, Brazil claimed that such a code should also address certain other aspects relating to prevention and accountability: that military action is a measure of last resort that can take place only in conformity with the Charter, and that decisions authorizing the use of force should rely on enhanced procedures for monitoring and assessing their implementation.

D. The working methods as part of the broader issue of Security Council reform

A number of speakers stressed that the issue of the working methods of the Council is an integral part of a much more ambitious endeavour, its reform process, and reiterated their well-known positions on the matter. They made clear that it is one major task that the international community should take up as it celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

In that vein, India argued that the problems afflicting the Council go deeper than its working methods. While a focus on working methods is useful, it can in no way be a substitute for reforming the Council in a manner that would give its decisions legitimacy and acceptability. Saudi Arabia reminded all present that the process of Council reform had begun in 1993 but, although positive results had been achieved in such areas as transparency and broader participation, it had, unfortunately, not yet been possible to find a comprehensive solution that allowed the Council to address its fundamental tasks as might have been wished. In the same spirit, Algeria called upon Member States to keep in mind that a two-track reform of the Council must be tackled, one structural and the other dealing with the working methods. Similarly, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, underscored that the efficiency of the Council was primarily dependent on the reform of its working methods, while at the same time recognizing the possibility of taking gradual steps with regard to improving the working methods of the Council.

Cuba considered that a genuine reform of the Council to transform it into a transparent, representative and democratic organ continues to be an outstanding issue and that, without that reform, the reform of the Organization will be incomplete. Furthermore, although changes to the Council's working methods are an essential aspect of its reform, the ones made to date have been merely formal and do not guarantee the genuine participation of Member States in the work and decision-making within the Council. Indonesia recalled that merely improving the working methods is not a solution to the larger problem, that efforts cannot be limited to procedures, and that it would continue to call for and contribute to efforts to realize a democratic, judicious, transparent, accountable and effective Council that reflects the plurality and concerns of all people. The Republic of Korea supported the idea that the working methods of the Council must be improved with a view to enhancing the Council's transparency, accountability, legitimacy and efficiency as an important matter within the broader context of Council reform. It stood ready to work with others to formulate a solution that could garner the support and understanding of the broader membership.

For his part, the President of the General Assembly recalled that the Assembly had decided to immediately continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during its seventieth session, and conveyed his intention to move the process forward as much as possible in the coming period.

While Poland looked forward to a swift resumption of the negotiations and Italy argued that the members must not shy away from debating the reform of the Council, with a view to making it more representative, transparent, democratic, effective and accountable, Mexico expressed hope that the spirit of cooperation seen in the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly will be transferred to the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and confidence that reforming the structure of the Council is possible if all parties place political will and commitment before any other consideration in the negotiations.

Panama further recalled that the current process of Security Council reform is a matter of growing interest to 97.4 per cent of this community and represents no less than the need for States to ensure that their membership is representative of current geopolitical and regional realities.

Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), argued the need for a reformed Council that is truly representative and reflects the current geopolitical realities, and in which Africa, Asia and Latin America are adequately represented, thus supporting the intergovernmental process on Security Council reform and efforts to move the process forward. France and Germany also supported an equitable representation on and expansion of the Council.

The geographical representation was the main point made by the African speakers. The Sudan considered that the reform of the modus operandi and procedures of the Council constitutes an important part of achieving comprehensive reform in a manner that would establish equitable geographical representation of the world's continents, especially with regard to Africa. Chad and Sierra Leone, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, recalled that Africa is currently the only continent in the world with neither a permanent representative nor the veto power. Thus, the legitimacy and credibility of the Council and the effectiveness of its action will depend in the future on the participation of all its members, on an equal footing. Rwanda further reinforced this position, as a member of both the African Group and the L.69 Group, arguing that, more than ever, the Council should be expanded in both categories, with the same rights and privileges, including the right to veto, as long as it exists. In the meantime, it is critical that the Council continue to improve its working methods, with a focus on transparency, effectiveness, inclusiveness and fairness. South Africa echoed the position, reiterating its commitment to the Ezulwini Consensus, which seeks to provide Africa with two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats.

IV. More cooperation and coordination with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices as a response to the new challenges of today's world

The message from the three briefers and of the wider membership was clear. There is room for improvement in the way the Council cooperates with other United

Nations organs, bodies and offices, and urgency in doing so to enhance the Organization's overall preventive and reactive response to today's world.

The link between the way the Council works and its capacity and readiness to adequately respond to today's world and new challenges was also established by many, while more interaction of the Council with other entities was called for, including the troop- and police-contributing countries, the regional organizations and the Council's regional counterparts, the special representatives of the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioners, the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice.

Overall, as Portugal noted, the main point made was not so much on the need for the Council to recognize the importance of such interaction — that is not new. What generally emerged from the discussion was the call to put that into full practice, or, as Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), put it, the Council needs to become better at cooperating with other United Nations and regional organs, bodies and offices.

Wider security issues, such as the security challenges facing small island developing States, "which are a matter of concern to the wider membership" (Italy), and migration, as "a joint integrated challenge confronting us" (Italy), the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security make it more crucial than ever.

To that end, Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), acknowledged that the challenges in coming to grips with the new threats are indeed very daunting, but also said that the Council can move to become more effective. Above all, that requires political will.

A. United Nations bodies

As Rwanda presented it, "from socioeconomic development, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to the review of peace operations, peacebuilding, and women and peace and security, Member States and different organizations have acknowledged the importance of adjusting the activities of the United Nations to the context of the world we live in today".

In the same vein, Italy stated that "we must acknowledge that today's security challenges are different from those of the past. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development introduces an integrated approach to sustainable development by linking together the five Ps of the Agenda: people, prosperity, partnership, planet and peace. Its implementation will require a fresh look at working methods and effective synergies among the various bodies of the United Nations. Similar challenges are posed by the need for an integrated approach to implement the recommendations stemming from the three major reviews under way on the future of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the role of women in peace and security". In Egypt's view, those same milestones "offer a unique opportunity to draw upon the broad-based membership of those bodies and to ensure a more holistic approach to sustaining peace and to reinforcing the linkages between the three pillars of the work of the United Nations", thus creating the need for closer cooperation and

interaction among those organs. For its part, Kazakhstan considered that "an analysis of current conflicts and geopolitical tensions demands that we not only conduct a review but institute an immediate, appropriate, strategic and transparent implementation of the necessary reforms".

From Turkey's perspective, regular and more substantive interaction between the Council and other United Nations bodies would not only augment the Council's transparency, openness and inclusiveness, but would also enhance the efficiency of the United Nations system in general. For Costa Rica, deepening communication between the Council and other bodies and actors allows the Council to effectively carry out its tasks.

1. Secretariat

The relationship between the Security Council and the Secretariat is shaped by the administrative functions the latter carries out, as well as by several other functions entrusted to the Secretary-General under Articles 98 and 99 of the Charter. The range of tasks it encompasses makes the Secretariat, as the Deputy Secretary-General noted, a vital partner of the Council.

Within the tasks under the Secretariat's responsibility, the Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the provision of detailed and actionable information on a wide range of issues on the Council's agenda; the translation of the mandates of the Council into peacekeeping operations, special political missions, sanctions monitoring groups and bodies such as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic; the provision of institutional memory and advice to the rotating Council presidencies and to its other members; and the implementation of decisions of the Council on its working methods.

Working methods developments

Looking at how the Council and the Secretary-General can better work together to maximize impact on the ground, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to some of the recent working methods developments: the briefings via secure videoconference from United Nations offices around the world; the Council website now offering a historical record of Council activities and information (for instance, on reporting requirements and mandate renewals); the expansion of the roster of the sanctions monitoring panels' experts to ensure geographical and other diversity; improving cooperation on sanctions through the Inter-agency Working Group on United Nations Sanctions; or the support to the Council in intensifying its cooperation with regional organizations.

Areas for further improvement

A particular accent, nevertheless, was put on how the Council can and should enhance its preventive role. To that end, the Deputy Secretary-General referred to the use of the "any other business" item to raise issues of concern and to the monthly briefing by the Department of Political Affairs to Council members on situations that could become threats to international peace and security.

The United Kingdom, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the ACT Group, the Netherlands (also on

behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Lithuania and Italy broadly echoed the same view. They also called for further use by the Council of those instruments, as they are helpful in bringing potential crises and deteriorating situations to the early attention of Council members.

Australia argued for better use by the Council of early warning mechanisms and timely briefings on threats, suggesting that, in this regard, the Secretariat should be empowered to bring to the Council's attention emerging threats, in line with the Human Rights Up Front initiative and Article 99 of the Charter. Italy also welcomed the strengthening of early warning mechanisms, such as the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, the Human Rights Up Front initiative and the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as valuable tools the potential of which will have to be fully exploited.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), and Portugal suggested that, in order to promote better interaction, Council members should respect the role of the presidency in organizing the Council's regular business for the month, including interactions with the Secretariat, as well as with other United Nations bodies, regional organizations and troop- and police-contributing countries.

Other suggestions aimed at improving the Council's working methods within its relationship with the Secretariat were presented, including enhancing the communications with the Secretariat before deploying peacekeeping missions or adjusting their mandates (China); enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping mandates and the triangular cooperation between the Council, the Secretariat and Member States at large, or making such cooperation more institutionalized, in particular with the troop- and police-contributing countries (Uruguay, Brazil, Rwanda, Republic of Korea); in order to maintain the effectiveness and legitimacy of the work of the Secretariat, the need to rotate the positions of the under-secretaries-general for peacekeeping, political and humanitarian affairs and certain other senior posts among all Member States and to make the process for their appointment more transparent (Russian Federation); strengthening the Secretariat's capacity to provide adequate assistance to the sanctions committees in their work (Lithuania); and the early appointment of Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council (President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Pakistan).

2. General Assembly

In 70 years of existence of the United Nations, as he recalled, Mogens Lykketoft was only the seventh President of the General Assembly to address the Security Council, the last time that happened having been eight years ago. Against that background, there was overall consensus on the fact that, as the President affirmed, the relationship between the Assembly and the Council could be both mutually reinforcing and complementary.

A number of areas in which the actions of both the Council and the Assembly are closely linked and even interdependent were identified by the President of the General Assembly and referred to throughout the debate. They included certain peace and security issues, the review of the Charter of the United Nations, the election of judges to international tribunals, certain recommendations from the Assembly to the Council, the Council's annual and special reports, the relations between the Council and certain subsidiary organs established by the Assembly and

the appointment of the Secretary-General. Colombia also considered it necessary to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality in the roles of the Assembly and the Council and that takes into account the fact that not only are military and field operations part of the Council's responsibilities, but so are conflict prevention, recovery and rebuilding operations in post-conflict situations.

Areas for further improvement

Given that the General Assembly receives and considers the annual and special reports of the Security Council, which, according to the Charter, shall include an account of the measures that the Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security, a number of speakers (the President of the General Assembly, Lithuania, Thailand, Paraguay, the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba, Algeria, Pakistan, Rwanda) called for the improvement of the analytical quality of the annual report and for more special reports of the Council, with some presenting concrete proposals in that regard (as detailed in section II.B.5 on increased flow of information to non-members of the Council). As the President of the General Assembly put it, the exercise represents an important aspect of the transparency and accountability that the wider membership expects vis-à-vis the Security Council.

The timely election of the 10 non-permanent members of the Council and their adequate preparation was another area touched upon. Within the context of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, the President of the General Assembly recalled that during its seventieth session the Assembly is to hold two elections of non-permanent members, the first having already taken place and the second scheduled for June 2016. While the decision was welcomed by several delegations (see section III.A.3 on greater inclusivity of the Security Council itself), Nepal considered that the election of non-permanent members should be further brought forward to allow the elected members at least one full year to prepare for their responsibilities, with a view to helping to ensure that their membership substantially enriches the work of the Council.

The importance of the way the Council works and its relationship with the Assembly was addressed most often within the context of the upcoming selection of the next Secretary-General. Proposals in that regard are detailed in section V.

3. Peacebuilding Commission

There was broad consensus on the usefulness of the relationship between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and its country configurations. As the United States underlined, the Council and the Commission play differentiated but complementary roles. Overall, the references made to the Commission emphasized its advisory and early warning capacity as instruments of direct importance to the Council's work.

While acknowledging the efforts made so far by the Council to strengthen its links with the Peacebuilding Commission, many speakers did stress the need for further improvement in the way the two bodies work together to maximize impact in the implementation of the Council's mandates on the ground in countries on its agenda, and encouraged more participation of the Commission and the Chairs of its country configurations in the plenary meetings of the Council (Egypt, Australia, Portugal, Turkey, Brazil, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Argentina, Rwanda, Tunisia,

Republic of Korea, Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, Chad, Nigeria, France, Germany, Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT Group), Mexico, Japan, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg). Lithuania also suggested their participation in consultations.

With regard to thematic issues, China suggested that the Council act strictly within its mandate and enhance its communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Chair of the Commission recalled that the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, on the challenge of sustaining peace (A/69/968-S/2015/490), would be under consideration by Member States. It provides recommendations on how to strengthen the relationship between the Commission and the Council, including that the Council regularly request and draw upon the advice of the Commission.

Moreover, and in the same vein as when referring to the relationship with the Secretariat, the call was particularly strong on the Council to make greater use of the Commission's early warning capacity. Several speakers, including Australia and Brazil, recalled that the recent peacebuilding review found that the Council should do better on conflict prevention and that overcoming fragmentation between the principal organs of the United Nations would strengthen its work in preventing conflict and sustaining peace, and called upon the Council to draw more regularly on the Commission's advice. Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the ACT Group and Portugal intervened in the same way.

Along with suggestions on how the Council could take better advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission, ideas were also presented on which areas. For his part, the Chair of the Commission highlighted three areas where the two bodies might work better together: (a) through its convening role of a wide array of critical regional and international actors, the Commission could bring a peacebuilding perspective to the Council's decision-making; (b) the Commission could help to formulate the post-conflict strategies of the countries requesting the Commission's advice and bring priority peacebuilding issues to the attention of the Council upon its request; and (c) in support of the drawdown phase of peacekeeping operations, the Commission could help to sustain attention and commitment from the international community to national peacebuilding priorities. The United States highlighted the valuable information from diverse stakeholders on the ground in post-conflict States provided by the Commission.

4. Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council was often mentioned side by side with the Peacebuilding Commission, with many speakers calling for a renewed and strengthened relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, not only based on the fact that, as the Security Council recognized in January 2015, security and development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing and key to attaining sustainable peace (S/PRST/2015/3), but mainly because many share the view that the 17 recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals provide an opportunity for the two bodies to build on best practices and take a renewed and active role in following up on implementation.

The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council recalled that the relations between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council were

enshrined in the Charter of the Organization, but considered that the provision foreseen in Article 65, which states that the Economic and Social Council may furnish information to the Security Council and shall assist it upon its request, had been very limited. Against that background, he viewed the definition of follow-up and review mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to engage in a joint reflection on how the Charter bodies of the United Nations, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, work together to translate the 2030 Agenda into tangible and coherent policy measures by the United Nations system and the international community at large. For Nigeria, the interaction between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council was almost negligible, and that, of the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, development and human rights — two of them, namely, development and human rights, fell under the purview of the Economic and Social Council. Nigeria thus called for closer interaction between both Councils, which was particularly crucial in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Side by side with lending a "new impetus" between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as the Czech Republic and Tunisia put it, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also "underlines the important link between security and development" (Czech Republic). The same point was made by the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea. While the United Kingdom considered Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals a good step forward in ensuring that the Council's work is not just about ending conflicts but also about avoiding future ones, the Republic of Korea attached great importance to how peacekeeping could dovetail with peacebuilding, while taking into account the visionary global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 16, on peace, justice and institutions. The Deputy Secretary-General also pointed in the same direction when referring to the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see A/70/95-S/2015/446) and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General (A/70/357-S/2015/682), particularly underlining the proposals related to prevention and post-conflict measures, not least in the areas of peacebuilding and development. He further recalled that "peaceful societies" is a goal for the 2030 Agenda.

Regarding what more could be done, the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council identified several issues of common concern on which the Economic and Social Council could interact with the Security Council on a regular basis, be it through the establishment of an ad hoc working group or through more systematic interaction: the promotion of institution-building and improved governance, the need for social inclusion as a key component for sustained peace, the role of women and youth in that context, the consequences of economic and financial crises for global stability and the impact of environmental degradation on weakened societies. Portugal also suggested that the Security Council's consultation with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council could become part of a much broader aspect, conflict prevention, while seeing merit in organizing periodic meetings to discuss issues relevant to both their agendas, mentioning in this context the intention of the United Kingdom to focus, in November 2015, on the important interrelations between security and development. For Rwanda, as a partner of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council should actively participate in Security Council meetings and fulfil its mission accordingly.

For its part, Kazakhstan suggested that the Economic and Social Council be transformed into a global development council, to be developed collectively, working towards the centenary of the United Nations, under a new plan for a 2045 global strategic initiative.

5. Other United Nations organs and entities: the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, the Human Rights Council and the special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General

While also referring to other bodies and actors, Costa Rica put particular emphasis on the importance of deepening communication between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, in order to allow the Council to effectively carry out its tasks. The International Criminal Court was further cited by Argentina among the organizations mentioned in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2013/515), and with which considered dialogue is essential in fulfilling the Council's functions. For its part, Lithuania considered that the Council should make better use of the tools available to pursue justice, including cooperation with the International Criminal Court, with respect to both new referrals and the follow-up on existing referrals. Along the same lines, France and Germany also were in favour of more extensive contacts between the Council and the International Criminal Court, either through visits by the Prosecutor or of the Council to The Hague, and of the improved sharing of information across peace missions in cases where the International Criminal Court was investigating, given that the activities of the Court are in fact intrinsically linked with the justice provisions of the mandates of those operations. As Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, the Permanent Representative of Italy stressed the importance of investing in the preventive power of justice by fighting impunity and promoting accountability, thus arguing that the Council should have a forum where international criminal justice issues could be regularly discussed, bearing in mind the various sensitivities at stake.

Arguing that respect for human rights and harmonious development are inextricably linked to peace and security, France and Germany further encouraged more frequent briefings to the Council by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights or his deputy and the Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as other human rights mechanisms. Given that, from their point of view, "the protection issues are at the heart of the Council's activities and its mandated peacekeeping missions; this is the heart of a more preventive approach to crises. It is therefore natural that the Council should interact directly and frequently with those who are primarily responsible for these issues", Italy and Lithuania also explicitly referred to the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Costa Rica and the Republic of Korea found merit in regular public briefings by special envoys and special representatives of the Secretary-General.

Costa Rica included civil society organizations in the list of actors with which the Council should deepen its communication.

Portugal suggested that the Council do some thinking on how to make better use of the subsidiary bodies, including existing working groups, to capture the signs of emerging challenges to peace and security that are closely connected to the larger

development agenda — such as climate change, pandemics, illegal trafficking and organized crime — and submit timely reports on them to the Council when they deem action to be necessary.

B. Encroachment

While granting merit in finding ways to improve the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, several delegations nevertheless called on the Council to act strictly within its mandate and called for relationships based on respect for their respective competencies.

To that end, and regarding thematic issues addressed by the Council, Argentina, China, Cuba, Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, Nepal, the Russian Federation, Tunisia and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) were of the view that the Council should deal strictly with issues relating to threats to international peace and security on which it could and must take urgent and tangible decisions.

More specifically, China suggested that the Council focus its energy and resources on addressing the most urgent issues that threaten international peace and security. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela called for a more balanced focus of the Council's work, one which avoids applying double standards in the examination of the issues under its consideration. For its part, the Russian Federation called upon the Council to be cautious when it comes to the consideration of thematic subjects, in particular those that rightly should fall within the remit of the General Assembly, arguing that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and specifically Goal 16, is not a matter for the Council. Nepal argued that the Council should not in any way allow the feeling to be perpetuated that it hijacks other bodies' agendas or trumpets them as its own. The Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Security Council should cease its ongoing attempts to shift issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council over to the Security Council and its encroachment on the functions and powers of the Assembly. Cuba voiced its concern over the growing trend in the Council to consider matters and assume functions that do not fall within its area of competence, increasingly usurping the role assigned by the Charter to other organs of the United Nations, particularly to the General Assembly. Similarly, Argentina was not in favour of the Council, the function of which is the maintenance of international peace and security, absorbing the functions of other bodies, a trend which should be discouraged, given that the securitization of the United Nations agenda could lead to the Security Council assuming such matters to the detriment of bodies with universal representation, in particular the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Algeria also said that issues on the agenda of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council should not be shifted to the Security Council agenda.

Tunisia considered that a rich dialogue and collaboration between the Security Council and the General Assembly will enhance both entities and avoid overlap between their activities and the encroachment of the Council on the functions and prerogatives of the Assembly. Brazil's position regarding the relationship between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies was that closer cooperation is needed not only with the General Assembly — particularly concerning the issue of

Security Council encroachment on the Assembly's prerogatives — but also with the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. Similarly, Egypt pointed out the need for closer cooperation and interaction among those organs, while observing a balanced respect for their respective functions and mandates.

Colombia and Lithuania, on the contrary, requested the Security Council to have a more comprehensive approach to peace consolidation, one that avoids fragmentation and a silo mentality with regard to the roles of the General Assembly and the Council. Algeria, Indonesia, and Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Council should take into account the recommendations of the Assembly on matters relating to international peace and security.

C. Other entities and regional organs, bodies and offices

The call for reinforced dialogue and/or cooperation went beyond the United Nations, encompassing also a broad number of other relevant actors, with the main goal of helping the Council to be more efficient.

1. Concerned countries and troop- and police-contributing countries

China, Thailand, Egypt, Indonesia, Cuba and Tunisia were among those arguing that the Council should give more weight to the opinions of the countries concerned on its agenda and enhance dialogue and interaction with non-members. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), and the Netherlands, speaking also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg, also pointed towards active consultation and dialogue with countries on the Council's agenda.

Similarly, Brazil not only called for countries with a special interest in a substantive matter under consideration by the Council to have their views fully taken into account, but also to be allowed to participate in its consultations, with that applying particularly to those countries on the Council's agenda, but also to troop- and police-contributing countries. Furthermore, Kuwait, speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, argued that the States concerned in the questions under discussion by the Council should be allowed a decision-making role in the Council. The Sudan reasoned that Member States must share any matter that concerns them and, when dealing with such matters, the Council should allow adequate time to the States concerned when undertaking any procedure, adding that the matter should also be accorded further attention when it or its manifestation coincides with a weekend, as may be the case with developing events.

At the same time, while China recalled that such mechanisms as the meetings with the troop- and police-contributing countries and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations should be fully utilized, Costa Rica, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), the Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), Nepal, Rwanda, Tunisia and the Republic of Korea argued for active consultation and dialogue with such countries. Such interaction would promote a richer understanding of the challenges and potential solutions. Also, as the Netherlands stated, doing so would contribute to greater support for the mandates of such operations and, therefore, to a more effective fulfilment of those mandates.

For their part, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, India, Mexico, Egypt, Indonesia, Uruguay, Brazil, Peru, Pakistan and Ukraine supported timely consultations with the troop- and police-contributing countries on the definition, amendment or renewal of mandates. Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), specifically argued that troop- and police-contributing countries possess "knowledge and challenges that they acquire in the field" which represent "an asset that the Council must consider when discussing its mandates". From Egypt's perspective, "consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries should address the political and long-term strategy of the relevant peacekeeping missions". For Uruguay, "listening to the voices from the ground will lead to more credible and realistic mandates", or, as Pakistan put it, "their involvement in the processes of mission formation will address many issues related to command, control, communication, coordination and inter-mission movements".

2. Regional organs, bodies, offices and counterparts

A call for greater involvement of and enhanced cooperation with such regional organizations as the African Union and its subregional mechanisms, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, was also made by a number of delegations, including China, Chad, Nigeria, Italy, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Algeria, South Africa, the Sudan, Tunisia, Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Egypt, Costa Rica and Rwanda.

Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), also asked for more seriousness about the supporting partnerships and the complementary roles of the United Nations, regional organizations and counterparts, especially the African Union, in preventing and managing conflicts. Brazil added the need to consider new ways to improve the participation of regional and subregional organizations in the Council's decision-making process. Egypt emphasized the need for practical and more meaningful partnerships. As Rwanda summarized, "it is of great added value for the Council to maintain regular consultations with regional and subregional organizations ... for a better outcome in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and prevention. This kind of partnership will help the Security Council move from a culture of the daily management of crises to that of the effective prevention of conflicts".

With regard to concrete proposals aimed at enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, South Africa implored the Security Council to give effect to its resolution 2033 (2012), in which it decided, in consultation with the African Union Peace and Security Council, to elaborate further ways of strengthening relations between the two Councils, including through achieving more effective annual consultative meetings, the holding of timely consultations and collaborative field missions of the two Councils, as appropriate, to formulate cohesive positions and strategies on a case-by-case basis in dealing with conflict situations in Africa. Referring to the situation in South Sudan, in which some members of the Security Council were ready to impose sanctions despite the African Union Peace and Security Council being seized with the matter and the unfolding processes at the African Union level, South Africa also called for more consistency in the way the Security Council coordinates its position with that of the African Union.

V. Selection of the next Secretary-General

Within the topic of the Security Council's cooperation with the General Assembly, the vast majority of speakers referred to the process for the appointment of the next Secretary-General as one of the key decisions to be made over the coming year. Quoting Costa Rica, "the election of the next Secretary-General will be a golden opportunity to increase the equality, transparency, predictability and inclusivity of this process and to further strengthen the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as it is a decision taken not by the 15 members of the Council alone but by the entire membership".

Setting the tone, the President of the General Assembly recalled that "through General Assembly resolution 69/321 ... the United Nations membership has unanimously provided clear guidance for the way forward. Specifically, they have requested that the General Assembly President and the President of the Security Council begin the process ... [by] jointly circulating a letter to the whole membership inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner and describing the entire process. It is also envisaged that the Presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council would jointly circulate to all Member States, on an ongoing basis, the names of individuals who have been submitted for consideration as candidates, together with accompanying documents, including curricula vitae".

A. More transparency and inclusiveness of the wider membership

In order to move from an outdated way of selecting the Secretary-General, as the Czech Republic put it, Member States overall called for more transparency and inclusiveness, with General Assembly resolution 69/321 being broadly identified as the framework outlining the guidelines for such a process. As Rwanda underscored, it is in the interests of the credibility of the Organization. Paraguay also called for such a process to be dynamic, as well as for the Council and the Assembly to act in a coordinated and complementary manner, while Poland considered that greater interaction with the candidates should also guide the process. Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue of the appointment of the next Secretary-General on behalf of the ACT Group, specified the need to ensure that not only all Member States, but also the wider international community, have the possibility of learning about the vision of the candidates presented and interacting with them.

To this end, throughout the debate, the following concrete proposals were put forward:

(a) A clear timetable for the selection process (Mexico);

(b) The publication of a regularly updated list or the sharing of information on candidates (ACT Group, Colombia), as well as the membership to be kept abreast of developments (South Africa);

(c) The scheduling of meetings and hearings with declared candidates (ACT Group, Colombia, Czech Republic, Rwanda), with South Africa suggesting such engagement through a series of interactive dialogues in the General Assembly, and several others referring to, in terms of interactivity with the Security Council, Arria-formula meetings (Mexico, Netherlands (also on behalf of Belgium and Luxembourg), South Africa);

(d) The Secretary-General should issue reports, as is usual, summarizing the proceedings (India).

B. Profile of the candidates

Side by side with the process, another important element of resolution 69/321 brought up during the meeting and highlighted from the outset by the President of the General Assembly related to the profile of the candidates. The United States looked forward to a process that leads to the appointment of the best possible candidate for the position of Secretary-General. Egypt added that "landmark resolution 69/321 paves the way for a transparent and merit-based selection process". The Holy See recalled that the membership deems that the criteria for qualified candidates must include proven leadership and managerial abilities, extensive experience in international relations and strong diplomatic communication and multilingual skills. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, considered that the main concern should be ensuring that the best candidates come forward and are considered based on concrete selection criteria. South Africa suggested that the list of criteria should be developed in consultation with Member States and by drawing on the Charter of the United Nations and additional sources, such as previous Joint Inspection Unit reports on the criteria for senior management positions in the United Nations.

C. Gender equality/women candidates

The call for women candidates also strongly echoed throughout the debate. Lithuania, the Holy See and Tunisia underlined the need to consider equal and fair distribution based on gender. Germany and France firmly supported the call contained in General Assembly resolution 69/321, in which the Assembly invited Member States to consider presenting women as candidates for the position of Secretary-General, given that, to date, all the Secretaries-General have been men, while the United Kingdom affirmed that appointing a woman to the role would be more powerful still. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), suggested this element to be present from the outset, with the letter to be sent jointly by the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council calling for qualified candidates, especially women.

The support of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Poland extended also to mainstreaming women's equality in the Organization, as, from their point of view, choosing a female Secretary-General would constitute a significant step towards achieving gender balance throughout the entire United Nations system.

While Argentina indicated that it would be desirable for at least one candidate to be a woman (of those put forward by the Council to the General Assembly), Estonia, making additional remarks on the issue on behalf of the ACT Group, argued that in making the final decision, preference should be given to equally qualified female candidates. Colombia recalled the initiative, joined by 48 Member States, of searching for suitable women candidates for the position and argued that the historic role that a woman could play at this new stage would be the beginning of great progress in reform.

D. Regional rotation

Views as to whether there is any requirement for geographical rotation were also expressed. The Holy See and Tunisia argued in favour of taking into consideration an equal and fair distribution of candidates based not only on gender, but also on geographical balance. Poland recalled that in the 70-year history of the Organization, the Secretary-General has never been appointed from among candidates from the Eastern European Group, therefore expressing support for the Council taking regional rotation duly into account in its recommendation of a candidate to the General Assembly.

E. Beginning of the process/timing of the decision

Although the Russian Federation indicated seeing no practical value in launching the selection process immediately, a number of delegations shared the opposite view and the expectation that the Council would do its part in ensuring that General Assembly resolution 69/321, adopted on 11 September 2015, is fully and promptly acted upon.

Among those who called for the launching of the process as early as possible were Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)), Angola (on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain)), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Egypt, Estonia, Australia, Turkey, Costa Rica and South Africa, with Estonia voicing the hope of the ACT Group to receive the joint letter in the coming weeks so as to set in motion the whole process before the end of 2015. The basis for an early commencement derives from the understanding that, as the President of the General Assembly underlined, providing adequate time for preparation prior to assuming office in the Organization is fundamental to ensuring the effective discharge of responsibilities during the transition period.

F. Within the Security Council: procedural suggestions and multiple candidates

Referring to the process within the Security Council, India argued that an important step would be to do away with secret straw polls using different coloured slips[n] that allow the five permanent members to exercise the veto without even taking ownership of it. India added that discussions should be held in official meetings of the Council, preferably open ones but not necessarily so.

At the same time, India, along with Chad, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica, Argentina and South Africa, supported the call for the General Assembly to be able to choose among several candidates. As India put it, "while the pronouncements of the General Assembly do

[n] In 1981, the Council began the practice of conducting straw polls, under which members would indicate either encouragement or discouragement. In 1991, the practice of colour-coded ballots, with red for permanent members and white for elected members, emerged in later stages of the straw polls. By using this process, votes could be cast informally without holding an official meeting in the Council chamber or casting formal votes.

not specifically provide for it, there is, in our view, no legal impediment for the Council to do so". Among the reasons presented were enabling the entire membership to make the appointment and ensuring that the process includes an election, and not simply an appointment, so that the General Assembly can have a greater say in the selection of the Organization's highest position.

G. Term of office and re-election

In 1946, the General Assembly decided in its resolution 11(I) that the first Secretary-General should have a term of five years, renewable for a further five years. However, the resolution specifically provided that "the General Assembly and the Security Council are free to modify the term of office of future Secretaries-General in the light of experience".

Although a term of five years has become customary, it is discretionary. Thus, several Member States voiced their support for the principle of electing the future Secretary-General for only one term, even if, as Guatemala pointed out when referring to the provisions of resolution 69/321, no agreement was reached on the Secretary-General's term of office and re-election. Such were the cases of Chad and South Africa, with the latter specifically referring to a term of seven years, or Nepal, which argued that the term of the Secretary-General should be fixed and closed to extension to ensure that it is strong and effective, and to prevent the first term from being spent ensuring a second. For its part, Estonia, making additional remarks on behalf of the ACT Group, addressed the issue as yet to be settled, looking forward to a thorough discussion at the session of the duration of the term in office of the Secretary-General, including the option of a single, non-renewable term.

VI. Follow-up

A. Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions

As stated in the concept note for the debate, the Security Council has continued to adapt itself by constructively addressing several concerns relating to its working methods, thus making the working methods a dynamic and ongoing process.

Throughout the discussion, delegations highlighted a number of innovations introduced, often mentioning the range of previously agreed measures contained in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and subsequent notes agreed by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.[7] However, as Switzerland, on behalf of the ACT Group, clearly pointed out, since the publication of the note by the President (S/2010/507), the Council has agreed on 10 subsequent notes, but their implementation has often proved to be unsatisfactory or inconsistent. Thus, along with a general call for their further implementation, several proposals were put forward, as well as areas in which to make further progress and means thereto, including through the Informal Working Group.

[7] S/2012/402, S/2012/922, S/2012/937, S/2013/515, S/2013/630, S/2014/268, S/2014/393, S/2014/565, S/2014/739 and S/2014/922.

Regarding the Informal Working Group, Angola, on behalf of six Council members (Angola, Chile, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Spain), called for the Informal Working Group to base its future work on the common points of action from the outcomes of the open debate. Argentina proposed that, following the holding of open debates, the Informal Working Group take into account the areas of agreement among the broader membership as to how the Council works, underscoring two concrete issues: due process in the Council's sanctions committees, in particular with regard to the listing and delisting of persons, and the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court.[5]

B. Security Council

At the same time, Paraguay called upon the members of the Security Council to take up the outcomes of the debate. For its part, and in order to facilitate follow-up, the ACT Group suggested that the Council prepare a note that would consolidate and streamline all decisions taken regarding working methods.

Without specifying the forum, Japan stated that there should be a move from theory to practice, adding that to improve the working methods of the Council, it is essential to further codify invisible customs and practices of the Council. For its part, Costa Rica noted that despite the calls of the membership, a plan of action for implementing the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) and its subsequent updates has yet to be adopted.

VII. Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2015/19)

On 30 October 2015, 10 days after the open debate on its working methods, the Council adopted a statement by the President on the subject (S/PRST/2015/19).

The statement was the first Council decision in nearly a decade that was focused entirely on working methods, one of very few such documents in the overall practice of the Council and, although the initial draft text was circulated by Angola, New Zealand and Spain, the final text was the result of constructive engagement from all the Council members.

The statement builds on several of the issues addressed during the debate and registers advances in some areas regarding the Council's working methods, while, in other respects, it restates earlier commitments made by the Council. Nevertheless, perhaps its most important contribution was summarized by the President (Spain) at the adoption meeting: "I think it is a good sign that we are able to adopt texts that bind us in future to continue to work with greater efficiency and dedication".

[5] On the first issue, Argentina favoured including ombudspersons in all sanctions committees, beginning, as a first step, with the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. On the referrals made by the Council to the International Criminal Court, Argentina noted that, despite the Council regularly receiving from the Prosecutor of the Court the reports required by its own resolutions, it takes no action in response, even when the Court informs the Council that cooperation required under the Council's resolutions has not been provided.

United Nations A/70/680–S/2016/36

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2016
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda item 37
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of violations and acts of aggression committed by Israel in 2015 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Violations and acts of aggression committed by Israel in 2015

	Air violations					*Land violations*				
Month	*Military jet*	*Reconnaissance aircraft*	*Helicopter*	*Total*	*Sea violations*	*Military acts of aggression*	*Field violations*	*Breaches*	*Total*	*Grand total*
January	11	53	–	64	2	1	6	–	7	73
February	6	19	1	26	6	–	10	–	10	42
March	13	32	1	46	9	–	29	–	29	84
April	17	58	2	77	22	–	22	–	22	121
May	8	50	1	59	44	–	33	–	33	136
June	6	56	–	62	26	–	27	–	27	115
July	8	80	1	89	39	–	11	–	11	139
August	6	57	–	63	25	–	16	–	16	104
September	6	39	–	45	20	–	11	–	11	76
October	31	50	1	82	11	–	15	–	15	108
November	9	29	–	38	18	–	6	–	6	62
December	24	48	–	72	20	1	15	–	16	108
Subtotal	**145**	**571**	**7**	**723**	**242**	**2**	**201**	**–**	**203**	**1 168**

United Nations A/70/681

General Assembly

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14 January 2016

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Seventieth session
Agenda item 120
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

1. By its resolution 69/321, the General Assembly decided to establish, at its seventieth session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, open to all Member States.

2. In paragraph 5 of the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit an update on the provisions of the Assembly resolutions on revitalization addressed to the Secretariat for implementation that had not been implemented, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation, for further consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group at the seventieth session.

3. The present report is being issued pursuant to that mandate (see annex).

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Annex

Updated inventory chart of General Assembly resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, issued pursuant to resolution 69/321

Provisions requiring follow-up

No.	*Resolution*	*Text of provision*	*Implementing entity*	*Comments*
1.	68/307, para. 24	*Underlines* the need to fully implement and observe rule 55 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provides that, during the sessions of the Assembly, the *Journal of the United Nations* shall be published in the languages of the Assembly, from within existing resources.	Secretariat	This mandate has now been included in paragraph 41 of resolution 69/324, the latest resolution on multilingualism. In an oral statement at the time of the adoption of that resolution, a representative of the Secretariat informed the General Assembly that: "The current interpretation and practice with respect to rule 55 is that the *Journal* is published in the six languages of the Assembly during the main parts of the General Assembly, from September to December, while during the remainder of the year the *Journal* is issued in English and French only. Accordingly, if the General Assembly decides to continue with the current practice reflected in paragraph 41, adoption of the draft resolution would not require additional resources under the programme budget" (see A/69/PV.103).
2.	69/321, para. 54	*Recalls its request* to the Secretary-General to submit, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, proposals to review the budget allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures, and in this context looks forward to considering such proposals during the main part of its seventieth session.	Secretariat	The Secretary-General had put forward proposals for resources relating, inter alia, to the handover and overlap costs for staff of the incoming President of the General Assembly, who usually arrive earlier to start working in the Interim Office of the President-elect and therefore overlap with the staff of the outgoing President for several weeks (as reflected in document A/69/416, para. 13 (b) (i)), which, however, was not approved by the Assembly (see resolution 69/264). As a result, the latest proposed programme budget did not include any such proposals. In its resolution 70/247 on questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, the Assembly, however, once again requested the Secretary-General to review the budget

No	Resolution	Text of provision	Implementing entity	Comments
				allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures. The Secretary-General is currently reviewing the means by which the requirements of the Office of the President of the General Assembly can best be met in accordance with the Assembly's request.